electric shock treatment

steve reich
the state
negativland
front line assembly
contrastate

news & reviews of industrial, experimental, avant-garde, electronic & innovative music

3 summer 1992
£1.50

ESTI

CONTENTS

2 editorial

3 news

5 **frontline assembly** interviewed by matthew riley

7 zine reviews

11 **steve reich** by roger sutherland

16 **:zoviet*france:** discography

17 **hit the floor** by mx

19 **the unacceptable face of plagiarism?** negativland and others dissected by brian duguid

25 reviews

45 **the state** interviewed by b d

49 **contrastate** interviewed by phil taylor

51 estdirectory

54 letters

55 the back page

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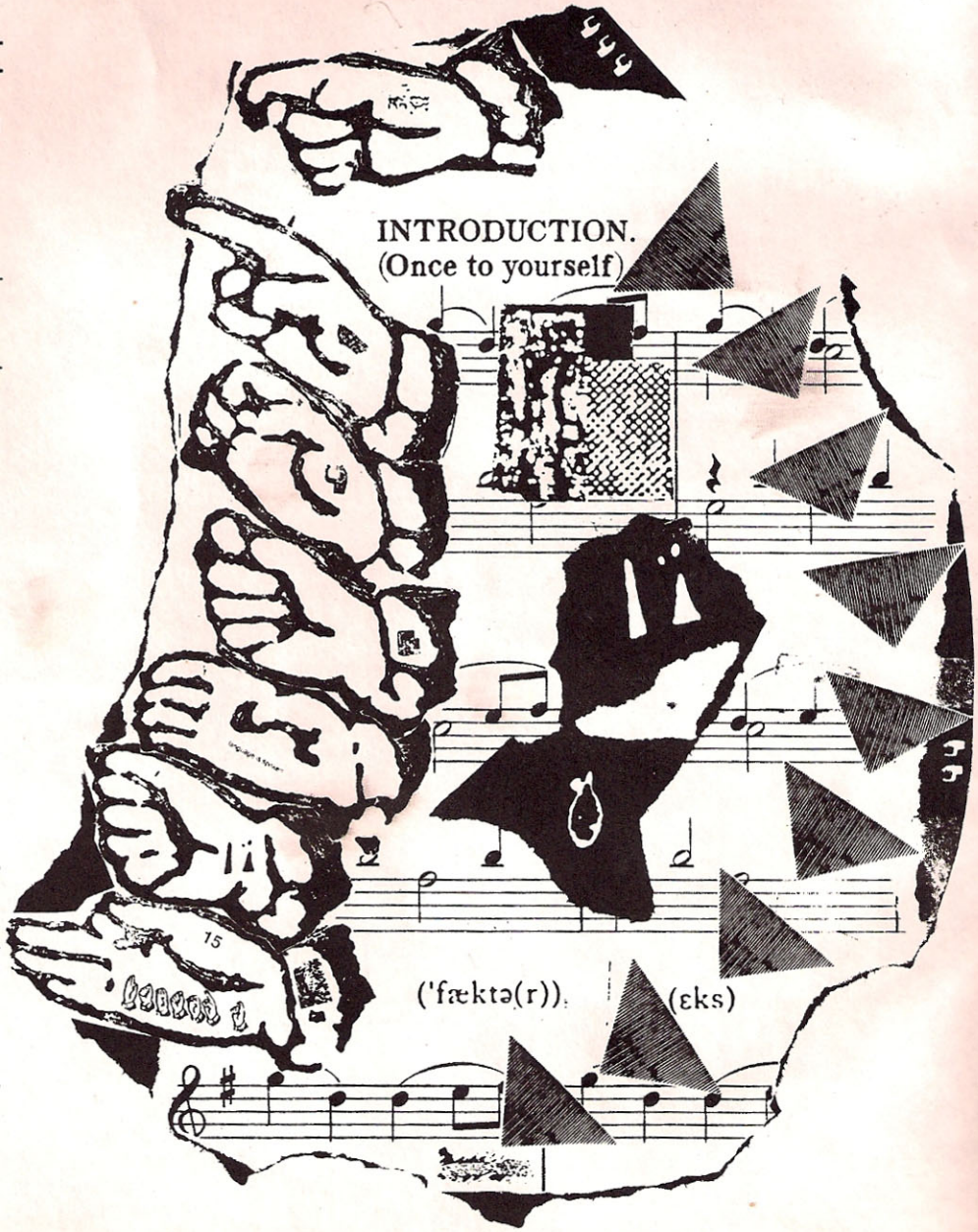
Well, this is **E**lectric **S**hock **T**reatment **#3**. Coming to you from a new address (please take note of it!), and hopefully being an improvement on the two previous issues. As you'll see, I've now reluctantly started taking in adverts: these are the only way I can afford to keep the magazine going.

Contributions of any sort are as welcome as ever. **E S T** is really too much work at the moment, and it needs more people to write and review for it. All reviewers get to keep the records / CDs etc, so if you're interested, then get in touch! I'm also looking for anyone who can help distribute more copies of the magazine.

Finally, apologies for the continued non-appearance of the promised feature on the occult publishing scene. Hopefully next time! Also, there are so many reviews this time that things may be a bit squashed space-wise. Hopefully there will be a bit more room next time.

Anyway, enjoy!

Brian



NEWS

In case anyone somehow missed it,**Genesis & Paula P.Orridge** (of T.O.P.Y. and PTV notoriety) had their house in Brighton raided in February. This followed the appearance on Channel 4's *Dispatches* of a report on "satanic child abuse", produced by journalist Andrew Boyd. Badly researched, and unpleasantly slanted, the report screened extracts from T.O.P.Y. video *First Transmissions*, which Boyd claimed depicted ritual abuse and a ritual abortion. They also screened the testimony of a woman named only as "Jennifer", who told how she had been involved in Temple rituals, including ritual abortions. As followers of Gen's performance art career will be aware, Boyd's interpretation is ridiculous in the extreme. A large quantity of videos and other material was seized from Gen's house, and police are now believed to be pursuing their investigations, although *Dispatches* has since been largely discredited. Gen, Paula and family were out of the country and have remained there for the time being. I understand that legal action is being considered. Hopefully, I'll be able to report further next issue. **E S T** extends its sympathies to those affected by Boyd's irresponsible allegations. At a time when occultists and sexual minorites are suffering increased persecution, it's important that the victims of police and press harassment receive as much support as possible.

Hybryds (see Reviews) had a CD release due in March on the German label Dark Vinyl, being Part 2 of *The Ritual Should Be Kept Alive*. A 3rd CD is also in preparation for Artware Audio, as is a video release for Alarma USA.

Audiofile Tapes (see Reviews) have several new releases on the way, including the reissue of *Ilyana Rasputin in Pittsburgh* from the UK's Runciter label; **Edward Ka-Spel**'s solo *Lyvv China Doll*; and cassettes by **Maeror Tri** and **Mental Anguish**. Also on the way is a C100 label sampler with music by the likes of Nomuzic, Ka-Spel, Alien Planetscapes, Swinebolt 45, Ulterior Lux, Through Black Holes Band and others. **Nomuzic** (the music project of Carl Howard, who runs aT) are also set to release *Cue Review* exclusively on Adventures in Reality, featuring a duet track recorded with Martin Bowes of **Attrition**.

Syllyk, the new project of Eric Lacasa and Sylvie Laroche of French label, La Légende des Voix, and of the band Sempiternels, has a six-track CD release out soon from Musica Maxima Magnetica, entitled *O Comme Icare*. Syllyk also appear on cassette compilations from Dark Side in Mexico, and Les Nouvelles Propagandes in France. **Sempiternels**, whose work is available from La Légende des Voix and Exart amongst others are also still appearing on new compilations around the world, despite no longer recording. Syllyk are also part of the group **Bovoso**, appearing in this issue's Reviews section.

The New Blockaders (turn back to those Reviews already if you haven't marked the page by now!) may also be defunct, but this seems only to have encouraged a flood of new releases. A joint tape with **Organum**, *Salute* is released on Dom Bartwuchs; they appear on the long-delayed *Freudwerk* compilation LP from the same source; several TNB bootlegs are available including *Noise War 1* and *Noise War 2* with the band **Krang**, as well as a bootleg single released by Two Thousand Maniacs in Japan. Finally, *TNB Est Mort!* is a (count 'em!) four CD package of unreleased and remixed material all crammed into an LP-size box with graphics, manifesto and discography, and should already be available, from Tokyo label Vis-a-Vis. Also planned is a rerelease of two Dom compilations, *Ohrenschrauben* and *Ohrensausen* (featuring Coil, Nurse With Wound, T.N.B., P16D4 and others) on the Dragnet Records label, as a double CD. Information from R Rupenus, 1 Beehive House, North Broomhill, Morpeth, Northumbria NE65 9UD.

Tears Compilations (see earlier *E.S.T.*s) have a new address: Hameau de Gouray, Rie St Martin Du Manoir, 76290 Montivilliers, France.

Plans at the American label Projekt include the CD re-release of *Mesmerized by the Sirens* by **Black Tape for a Blue Girl**; a cassette version of **O Yuki Conjugate**'s latest album *Peyote*, available from Multimood on CD; a collaborative ambient CD *Of Silent Crossings* by Black Tape and **Vidna Obmana**; and a third volume of their compilation series *From Across This Gray Land*, which has previously featured the likes of Lycia, Attrition and Popol Vuh.

As well as their CD *A Live Coal Under the Ashes*, due in March from the German label, the Tesco Organisation, **Contrastate** have two otherwise unavailable tracks on a cassette compilation on the French Dedali Opera label, also including work from Adam Nohman, La Nomenklatur and Par Pascal Liguoro. They're also recording a new track for a Portuguese compilation LP.

News from **Konstruktivists** and the **Runciter Corporation**: several Konstruktivists recordings are due for reissue. World Serpent have CDs of *A Dissembly* (originally released in 1983 on Flowmotion), and later *Glennascaul* (originally on Sterile). Third Mind reissue the label's first ever LP, 1983's *Psycho-Genetika*, with *Black December* following along later. To follow their recent CD EP, *Tic Tac Toe*, Konstruktivists release further four track CDs, *Hurts So Good* and possibly also *She Loves It*. These are all radically different forms of tracks from the forthcoming album *Forbidden*, also on World Serpent. There's also a possibility of some live gigs in Italy. Konstruktivists member Joe Ahmed's other group, Chekists, also has a 4-track CD EP due on World Serpent. Meanwhile, another member, **Lawrence Burton** has two cassettes due for release from his own Runciter Corporation: *34 Golden Greats* by the Pre War Bus Conductors, and *Enjoy!* by the Fist Fuckers.

Across the world, **Anomalous Records** plan this year to release 7" singles by the Legendary Pink Dots, Hands To and Brume / Sudden Infant.

The **V2 Organisation**, in the Netherlands, expects a busy year. Already available should be *The Book for the Unstable Media* and *The CD for the Unstable Media*. The former compiles pieces (in Dutch and English) by several artists and writers, such as Paul Virilio (on nanotechnology) and Gregory Whitehead (on radio art) plus 80 black and white photos from V2's archive. The CD archives performances at the V2 space over the last five years by the likes of The Hafler Trio, Merzbow and Strafe für Rebellion. They're also putting out a video and album documenting **Eric Lunde**'s *Witness to Disaster* installation / performance. And they'll continue to house more performances and installations throughout the year.

Hypnagogia Records's CD compilation *Sky Flowers and Horse Eggs* is now set for release this May, with contributors including Blackhouse, Thomas Köner, Nocturnal Emissions, Etant Donnes, John Watermann, Zoviet France and others.

These Records, formerly Recommended, continue to house a series of free live gigs in their shop, every second Saturday at 2pm. Address in the Directory. June 6th sees **John Grieve** with a "sound sculpture" work; June 20th **Conspiracy**, an improvising group influenced by AMM; and July 4th **Furt**, "real-time digital sampling and sound transformation". You're guess is as good as mine. Also on the way is a CD on the These Records label with a selection of DAT recordings from past gigs, including people like Morphogenesis, Charles Hayward,

David Toop and Max Eastley. These are also issuing *Repeat* later this year, a compilation of unreleased material by **This Heat**, and possibly a debut album by sampler-based **Barbed**. Also on the way in the Autumn is a release by Morphogenesis' **Michael Prime**.

Metamkine Records have organised special arts events in Paris for the 4th and 5th of June, with film showings, and music by Metamkine's Jérôme Noetinger. Contact Metamkine for more information. They are also issuing a limited edition selection of three film-related 3" (8cm) CDs at the same time by Noetinger, Michel Chion and Michèle Bokanowski.

Dying Earth, responsible for the **Splintered** 7" reviewed elsewhere in this issue, follow it up soon with a 7" by **Skullflower**, limited to 500 copies with the first 30 signed.

Coil, those loveable cuddly people, are releasing a limited edition CD of new and unreleased material from the *Love's Secret Domain* sessions. Contact Threshold House, BM Codex, London WC1N 3XX if you feel the uncontrolled desire to obtain everything ever released by Coil ...

Doc Wor Mirran, as well as the material reviewed this issue, have a variety of material recently released. *Odds Sods and Dirtclods* is a three-LP box set via RRRecords; *Gravy Slam* is an instrumental album released on four different labels. A musique concrete 7" comes from Korm Plastics, *Don't Menschen the Wor*, and a more grunge-oriented one from Forced Exposure in the States, *Quickly Skitzo*. Contact: MT Records, Muggenhoferstr. 39, 8500 Nurnberg, Germany for details.

Cold Spring have confirmed two scheduled releases: a 75-minute retrospective CD from **Crash Worship ADRV**, and a ten-band LP/CD compilation, with the likes of Controlled Bleeding, Splintered, Grey Wolves, Crash Worship and Ramleh. Should be good. Contact: Cold Spring, 87 Gloucester Avenue, Delapre, Northampton NN4 9PT. Meanwhile, Cold Spring's Justin Mitchell is moving his **Pure** column, a regular source of industrial music news, from Spiral Scratch to Lime Lizard.

He's also involved in the organisation of **Pushing Against the Wire**, a week-long music and arts festival at Northampton's Roadmender Centre schedule for September. A noise night, with **Splintered, Headbutt** and **Skullflower** is confirmed; as is a techno night and a **Test Dept** gig, supported by the notorious performance artist(s), the **Fred Carter Group**. For more details watch the press, or phone Justin on (0604) 859142. It deserves your support: if it does well, there'll be more to come.

The Grey Area is organising a film night at London's Scala cinema on the last Wednesday of every month - check the listings mags for details. There are hopes to incorporate live performances (like pianists accompanying silent films) into the evenings, with the likes of Zoviet France, Cabaret Voltaire and Bruce Gilbert providing the soundtracks. Other news via The Grey Area: **Die Krupps** are recording a new album for Rough Trade Germany. **Einstürzende Neubauten** likewise are busy with new recordings. **Laibach** have two live recordings (from 1982 and 1985/6) being prepared for Grey Area release, to follow their new album *Kapital*. Also in the Grey Area pipeline are the two releases by the **Musique Brut** label, Graeme Revell's *The Insect Musicians*, and the compilation *Necropolis, Amphibians and Reptiles*.

Chris and Cosey also seem quite active. They've recently put out a new information bulletin, which fans should send SAE etc to the address below to get hold of, containing as it does a pretty comprehensive survey of their activities to date. Cosey's *Time To Tell*, originally released in 1982, is set to reappear as a magazine and CD, probably via The Grey Area. Contact: BM CTI, London WC1N 3XX.

Side Effects Records, home to Lustmørd and S.P.K. in the past is becoming active again. On the way are new albums by **Psychophysicist**, a collaboration between the Hafler Trio's Andrew McKenzie and the Anti Group's Adi Newton. **The Anti Group** itself releases the soundtrack to their film *Burning Water*, while **Lustmørd**'s new album *The Monstrous Soul* shoud already be out (watch out for an interview next issue too). **Monte Cazazza** has a live album on the way, to be followed by a new releases, *The Cynic*. All material is being distributed by World Serpent.

World Serpent themselves continue to be involved in the reissue of loads of old **Current 93, Sol Invictus** and **Nurse With Wound** albums on CD format. They're also distributing new releases by **Karl Blake** and his Shock Headed Peters project and an industrial dance CD EP by Iceland's **Reptilicus**. Related artists Sol Invictus, **Death in June** and the wonderful **Zone** are all busy recording new albums, and the label is planning a CD of unreleased **Burroughs / Gysin** material.

Mind Scan is seeking music for future UK Electronics compilations, and split cassettes for all styles of electronic music. Send as many tracks as you want on a C60 before the end of this year to their usual address. Meanwhile, **Impulse Magazine**'s Mark Crumby is hoping to produce a **Whitehouse** scrapbook. Send any relevant material to him: if it's used you will receive a free copy when it's finished. He's also considering a Whitehouse-related cassette compilation to go with it: cover versions and other "ditties" are appreciated. Contact: Impulse, 41 Quarrendon Road, Amersham, Bucks. HP7 9EF.

Vittore Baroni (see address for Trax) still wants stickers, of all shapes and sizes for this year's sticker exhibition and for a forthcoming Stickerman book. All participants receive a special adhesive membership card and documentation.

The **Third Mind Records** offices at Harrow Road in London were burnt down in an arson attack at Easter on a hairdresser occupying the building's ground floors. A **Front Line Assembly** master tape was reported lost, and damage to the office and its contents was almost total.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH
RHYS FULBER
of frontline assembly

By the time you read this, **Frontline Assembly**'s new album *Tactical Neural Implant* will have been released. If you've already purchased said item, then please bear with me, as I will be trying to describe it to the uninitiated. I'm not just interested in the new album: I talked to Rhys Fulber about the other projects we all love just as much, or perhaps not. Namely **Intermix**, **Noise Unit**, **Will** and **Delerium**.

Anyway, *Tactical Neural Implant*. What an excellen title! Pertaining to the nervous system ... it certainly makes me twitch. It's an apt title, the latest strategic step in **FLA**'s deviously commendable plan to crush the feeble-minded dance that dominates today. This will eventually be achieved from within, using inside information, and sometimes insider techniques. **FLA** are the bug in the system that is the music industry. To use an old cliche: they're the virus that transmits itself insidously, invisibly. **FLA** make people nervous. The product they make is new, and to some a little intimidating. To be new is to intimidate?

"I'm not really conscious of that. We're not going out of our way to intimidate people. We're just pleasing ourselves really. I think it's good to generate a reaction of any kind, good or bad. The biggest worry, for me, is music just leaving people blank. When there's no reaction, that's weird. I like people to say 'I like this' or 'I don't like this'. But we don't go all out to make nasty sounds, use samples of F-words and things like that."

To electronic music practitioners and consumers, what **FLA** do isn't nasty though. It's almost natural. We're a different type of fan. Me, I know I'm turned on, I'm impressed, I'm interested and fascinated by samples, lyrics and effects that are out of the ordinary. That's the **point** of this music. The moral majority, the 'ordinary' listener, just **will not** make the effort with these songs. The vast majority react negatively before they've even heard the music. As does the media, the newspapers, television and radio (exceptions including MTV and Musicbox (a little), Snub TV and on occasion, Rapido. Even Colin Dale's three hour slot on Kiss 100FM has been slashed by a third). There's not time, it seems, for innovative electronic music any more.

"Yeah, I know. That's why **Depeche Mode** are where they are and we're where we are! No offence to them, I like a lot of their stuff, but they don't have that intimidation factor, if you want to call it that."

Rhys certainly isn't bitter; not as sour as I feel at times. Perhaps Rhys' attitude of resigned acceptance is mirrored to an extent on *Tactical Neural Implant*. The tracks *Outcast* and *The Blade* are hugely influenced by hip-hop and techno trends. Don't let this put you off! The new **FLA** will still be abhorrent to most ears. Perhaps only techno fans with a little imagination, those who don't need ecstasy to get high, might appreciate these tracks. This goes for **Intermix** as well. During our conversation, Rhys stressed the importance of accessing a new audience via the **Intermix** project. But I don't see how new people are going to have the chance to even hear such music in the first place. It's like, there's a conspiracy afoot: ignore hard, aggressive, challenging sounds at all costs! Then Rhys astounds me.

"They played **Intermix** on Radio One, John Peel played it, which I thought was a bit strange because he'd probably never touch **FLA**! I'm not worried about it though. If no-one buys it, we still had fun making it."

This revelation came as quite a shock to me: I gave up listening to Peel about three years ago when he became fixated with grunge guitar pop and world music. Still, I bet he won't play it again, and he definitely won't touch *Tactical Neural Implant*.

Although markedly dissimilar to the previous album, *Caustic Grip*, it remains a punishing, rewarding listening experience. *Final Impact*, which opens the album, follows the *Iceolate* style - smash, bang, wallop! *Mindphaser* and *Gun* are reminiscent of *No Limit*, fast, oiled mechanics. There's no electro-thrash here. **FLA** have redefined themselves, jettisoned much of the gore, and hitched a ride on the new technology of today.

"With **Intermix** we wanted to do new things. Long before we started the new album we knew we had to do something different. We got some ideas for **FLA** songs during the **Intermix** sessions, for example, *Outcast*."

The **Intermix** project, plus a couple of songs on **FLA**'s latest are evidence of a softening of approach, maybe a maturing of the band's outlook on life. Perhaps they don't have to strive for extremes any more. They've already proved, through their different projects, just what a different approach can result in.

"We keep everything separate because we want to keep the visions of each separate, the identity of each project. It's nice to work on a bunch of things and then do a new **FLA** album. It keeps everything fun for one thing! It keeps us interested, you learn things that you wouldn't if you did the same thing all the time. I think you can grow musically during a short period of time if you do lots of different things. I'm doing something musically almost every single day in one form or another; I don't know what else to do with myself! On the **FLA** album we were spending six hours a day at least on it. Before I came to Europe, I was writing some new **Will** songs."

Will's new release, due early summer, is *Word Flesh Stone*, and, again, it's different from the last. *Pearl of Great Price* was put together over three years, therefore much of the material was already dated when released. In Rhys' view at least. Not so *Word Flesh Stone*. I ask a question designed to intimidate. Which of the various projects would Rhys like to see the most successful?

"I don't know. Probably a toss up between **FLA** and **Will**. **FLA** is Bill [Leeb]'s baby, and **Will** is my baby. I like doing both. It's hard to say one or the other, and it's dangerous to do that!"

With the exception of **Will**, I do notice a disturbing similarity between projects nowadays. Stylistically, they're merging. **Noise Unit** : **FLA** : **Delerium** : **FLA** : **Intermix**.

"**Noise Unit** is now defunct. We got on really well with Marc Verhaegen, but we just went our separate ways. He's got a kid and his life is taking a more domestic turn. He likes music as a hobby, and has no aspirations as a professional musician. He does have some wonderful old beast synthesisers though!

"Recent **Delerium**, now that's confusing. *Euphoric* was recorded over a year ago actually. In retrospect we would have put it under the **Intermix** flag. It was done so long ago that at the time we never realised what we'd be doing a year later."

There had been talk of a **FLA/Pankow** collaboration through the mail, a prospect that makes the mouth salivate. But, "I don't think that's going to happen. It's too much hassle, we're too busy with all these other projects."

What fascinates me personally is all these different outlets, all these different worldviews, these different philosophies. To me, this just reinforce the strengths of electronic music. It can mirror so many different aspects because it has a truly adaptable nature.

"**Delerium** is how we meditate. We try to make an atmosphere, an ambience, that we can have on while we're lying around! **FLA** is dealing with current global matters. I won't say media as such, but things that dictate how the music comes out. **FLA** and **Intermix** are definitely urban. **Will** is more elemental, more spirtiual, I won't say religious. These are the basic images and perceptions."

This is definitely how these various personas are perceived in Britain. **FLA** et al are coming out of the underground a little, inch by inch, groove by groove. They're a reflection, albeit a little twisted, of what's happening now, and hopefully a precursor to the future of music. Tomorrow's music today. Really.

Frontline Assembly's *Tactical Neural Implant* is available on Third Mind Records (TM 9269) or Roadrunner Records (IRS 983.469) now. Related releases include **Delerium**'s *Spiritual Archives* (Dossier Records) and *Euphoric* (Third Mind) and **Intermix**'s *Intermix* (Third Mind). Interview March 92 by **Matthew F Riley**.

zine REVIEWS

One or two items below are books really, but I've listed them here anyway. As always, if you're only asking for information, enclose an SAE or IRC. All addresses are UK unless otherwise specified: if you live outside the UK and only one price is listed, send a bit extra to cover the additional postal costs.

Artware Audio Newletter #3 (24pp A5, 3DM to Artware Audio)

As well as updates on Artware's extensive experimental / post-industrial stocks (in English), their Newsletter includes reviews (in German) and an article on Merzbow (German) including a comprehensive discography.

Audion #20 (40pp A4, £1.60 to Ultima Thule, 1 Conduit Street, Leicester LE2 0JN)

Still overflowing with dodgy 70s progressive rock, but still worth getting hold of if you're interested in innovative music. There's an interesting article on composer Bernard Parmegiani by Roger Sutherland, a worthwhile piece on Ash Ra Tempel, an interview with Justine, and stacks of reviews, covering people like P.Orridge, Tietchens and O Yuki Conjugate in amongst the spacerockers.

Beathag (16pp A4, from the Runciter Corporation)

Beathag collects several of Lawrence Burton's shorter comic strips, along with some zine reviews and a diatribe against art by Robert Le Cawunn. The strips vary from the personal (*Fifteen Things I Will Remember About Working for the Royal Mail in Coventry*) through the surreal (*Dada*) to the sublime (*Sid Has 40 Winks*). Highly recommended.

Convulsion #1 (36pp A4, £1, but add 50p postage?, Jon Bains, 153 Dalkeith Road 1FR, Edinburgh EH16)

How to make a zine editor jealous in one easy stage: **typography** and **design**. This astonishingly professional looking mag should go down a treat with hardbeat / indie fans, including as it does interviews with Revolting Cocks, Nomeansno, Skinny Puppy, Sonic Boom, Buffalo Tom, Nine Inch Nails, Frontline Assembly and Ice-T. Throw in a few reviews and you ought to know by now if this is for you or not. I hope they manage to get a second issue out.

Dark Diamonds #3/4 (76pp A5, £1 + SAE?, Andrew Cocker, 1 St John's View, Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS23 6NQ)

There's been a tradition amongst many zines, especially those out of the punk scene, to try and cover political issues, by means of short articles or diatribes (see for example *Resonance*, below). *DD* 3/4, a double issue, is the best that I've seen, devoting the entire issue to the North/South crisis. It covers issues like the Third World debt, cash crops, aid, the arms trade, agribusiness and possibilities for action. Don't be put off by the quantity of information here: this is well researched and a valuable source for reference. READ IT NOW.

Divulgo #2 (20pp A4, contact: Myriam Tanniere / Divulgo, 2 rue de Grenoble, 31500 Toulouse, France)

Involved in the promotion of "the new musics and sub cultures", this issue of Divulgo is a compilation of information on the label Freedom in a Vacuum, The Residents, their fanclub UWEB, Mike Shannon, the Touch label and Staalplaat. I found the last particularly interesting and if any of these interest you, then get in touch too.

Dyadique Infos #4 (16pp A5, Dyadique, 113 rue Pelleport, 33800 Bordeaux, France)

Which contains very brief interviews, variously in French and English, with Timekode, SHA 261, Las Animas, Endraum, Babel 17, Maxence Cyrin, Wunderlich Ausgang, Aerial Angeline, Tuatha de Danaan and L'An III. Plus news and contacts (in French) for the alternative and underground music scenes.

Ekomedia #1 (12pp A5, $2 or equivalent, P.O. Box 98, N-9160 Vannvaag, Norway)

This aims to be a regular bulletin of environmental news from the polar areas of Scandinavia and the ex-Soviet Union. This issue mostly covers Soviet nuclear testing on the islands of Novaya Zemlaya, as well as problems with nuclear reactors and waste transportation in the area. I don't know how things will have changed following the Soviet Union's collapse, but Ekomedia is a good source of information otherwise receiving little publicity over here.

Everyman #1 (20pp A5, 80p, £1.50 EC, £2 elsewhere, Runciter Corporation)

Written by NKVD and illustrated by Lawrence Burton, this little comicbook story is a bizarre account of time travel to a futuristic dystopia. A lot of it reminds me of Fritz Leiber's *The Big Time*, there are some cute industrial-music in-jokes, and there's not much more I can say. Maybe #2 will help make it all comprehensible.

Feedback (48pp A5, £5, £6.50 EC, £7.50 elsewhere, T.O.P.Y. HEART)

This transforms one fairly scruffy T.O.P.Y. booklet into an attractively typeset, squarebound edition. If you've already read it, you won't need this, but *Feedback* is a perfect introduction to T.O.P.Y. for those wondering what all the fuss is about. It's a compendium of writings on "what the Temple is" by people with long-term involvement or only recently introduced. As a result, it's self-contradictory and almost invariably positive, but the first of these is a good thing. For those who already know what T.O.P.Y.'s all about, but who haven't read this yet, it's also worthwhile, as a source of inspiration and encouragement.

The Fifth Path #2 ($5 USA, $6.50 Europe, Robert Ward, The Fifth Path, P.O. Box 1632, Carmichael, CA 95609-1632, USA)

The premier zine for pseudo-Satanists and lovers of associated music continues its "Total War on Ignorance": the reviews here cover the likes of Boyd Rice, Death in June and Sol Invictus. Rozz Williams of Christian Death is interviewed, there are articles on the Kodo drummers and East German skinheads, and a brief piece on shelters and knives to keep survivalist happy. There's even a set of reviews of naff Halloween records, in case anyone thinks it's all taken a bit too seriously ...

File Under: Generic #1 (8pp A4, Jason Whittaker, 110 Renfrew Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 3HJ)

Flimsy stuff, a complete waste of time, Jason would no doubt say if he was reviewing it. Zine reviews, a page contribution by a certain Jim Thirlwell, and a diatribe against rock promoters obviously the result of bitter experience.

Gneurosis #000 & #1 (44pp A4, #1 is £2 + 50p UK (add more elsewhere), P D Condon, P.O.Box 1471, London N5 2LY)

Everything you ever possibly wanted to know about the Out of Order Order, plus, in #0 an interview with David Tibet. Bizarre cosmology, occult pisstaking, detourned Xian comics, reviews, pataphysical mathematics. Amusing enough, but the first issue's spread a bit thin. Haters of political and occultist dogma ought to enjoy it the most. #1 is better, interviewing Organum, Konstruktivists and the notorious Ken Campbell. Great graphics (lovely Cawunn & Burton comicstrip) and a take-no-bullshit attitude lift it high above many zines. It accuses everyone in sight of a lack of intellectual rigour but it's frequently guilty of the same sin itself. Great stuff.

Godsend #17 (26pp A4, $1.50 US/Can, $3 elsewhere, c/o Todd Zachritz, 1401 Fuquay Road, Evansville, IN 47715, USA)

Devoted to noncommercial music, mostly hardbeat through industrial, this issue of Godsend interviews Skinny Puppy, PBK, Asmus Tietchens, Jarboe (of the Swans), Numb and Pile of Cows. Plus a pile of reviews and contacts, and a pro-legalisation drugs screed. Scruffy, but plenty of information for fans of industrial musics.

Hoax #1 (20pp A4, no price given, try £1?, John Quel, 64 Beechgrove, Brecon, Powys, Wales LL3 9ET)

The mutant offspring of *Datakill* magazine, *Hoax* is a guide to the fun world of pranks: destroying computer terminals, phone pranks, urban legends, food fun, loads of postal pranks, graffiti ideas and so on. There's also a very good zine review section. I'm reluctant to praise **anything** to the skies, but I have to. *Hoax* is great!

Industrial Nation #2 (32pp A5, $1.50 US, $2 Can/Mex, $3 elsewhere, Industrial Nation, 114 1/2 E College, Suite 16, Iowa City, IA 52240, USA)

Like *Technology Works* and *Godsend*, *Industrial Nation* is part of a recent show of American interest in all things industrial. Concert, record and zine reviews make up most of the zine, with a Nitzer Ebb interview being the main feature. There's also a discussion of "industrial music" that's unfortunately a bit historically inaccurate. Currently pretty thin, but I wish it well for the future.

Leisure #4 (28pp A4, £1 + SAE from PO Box 368, Cardiff CF2 1SQ)

"Lies, Culture, Subversion" reads the subtitle. There's an article on networking, a woman's Piss Manifesto, a fairly awful Graham Harwood comic, an article on Oxford's council estates, a diatribe against Virtual Reality technology, and various reviews. The only clued-up, down-to-earth radical mag left now that *Anticlockwise* is pushing up the daisies.

Mark's Little Book About Kinder Eggs (32pp A7, 50p or suitable swap, Mark Pawson, P.O. Box 664, London E5 0JW)

A postmodern philosophical treatise on rampant consumerism, or the loving work of a Kinder Egg addict? Well, it's the latter of course. Lovers of modern trivia will need this book to show to grandchildren in 50 years time. Lovers of Kinder Eggs should waste no time and write to Mark immediately ...

Masterbator #3 (28pp A4, no price given, try £1.50, no address given either but I'd try the same address as *File Under Generic*)

Graphics and text to delight all you sick fucks out there. There are attacks on the police and *The Sun*, pessimistic eco-facts, an interview with "Cinema of Transgression" film-maker Richard Baylor, loads of great graphics and other bits and pieces. You ought to know whether or not you'll like this!

Mehr Bewußtsein! (book [in German], contact Richardstrasse 29A, D-2000 Hamburg 76, Germany)

"The thorough tidying of the room, the sterilisation of the syringe, the proper and secure mounting of the mirror and the preparation of the sunglasses with elastoplast, so that the blood will not run into the eyes. I locked myself in ..."

This extract is not taken from a Stephen King horror movie, but was written by someone who, for the purpose of heightening his consciousness, has drilled a hole in his own skull. The name of this person is Immo Jalass, and he has recorded his self-experiments in his book *More Consciousness*, published by Edition Meinhorn, Hamburg 1991.

Trepanation, or skull-perforation, was well known as a healing method in the middle ages. Jalass takes up this practice, apparently with some success, in order to arrive at a higher level of consciousness and to increase the feeling of pleasure. Additionally, he recommends a whole range of 'conventional' drugs for this "self-correction" procedure. A dubious book if you ask me, in particular because on numerous occasions the author encourages others to copy his ideas, despite the fact that they might be less experienced with using drugs, let alone skull-perforation. **DK**

Memes #6 (44pp A5, £2, Memes, Norman Jope, 38 Molesworth Road, Plympton, Plymouth, Devon PL7 4NT)

The usual selection of avant-poetry, mostly quite vibrant or virulent, plus an editorial designed to chill the pants of zine reviewers: thoughts on the superfluous nature of the vast majority of modern writing. There's also a brief discussion of writing as a magical rite, fictions, aphorisms and reviews. For anyone with an interest in modern poetry, it's an intelligently written and put together zine.

Mondo 2000 #5 (128pp A4, $5.95, try any comic shop, Tower Records etc or Counter Productions; UK distribution is by Titan Distributors, PO Box 250, London E3 3LT; US subs address is Mondo 2000, PO Box 10171, Berkeley, CA 94709-5171, USA)

The world's leading cyber-fashion magazine (pause to vomit on the floor) carries on. This issue is, as ever a pile of crap, but nonetheless possibly worth picking up for the interview with Elliott Sharp and Glenn Branca, a chat with cult novelist Mark Leyner, and a surprisingly competent if all-too brief piece on "post-industrial music". There are also fairly tedious interviews with the Residents and Nine Inch Nails, and more gloss than Crown Plus Two.

Music from the Empty Quarter #3 & #4 (84pp A5, £1.50, The Empty Quarter, P.O. Box 87, Ilford, Essex IG1 3HJ)

Well, they've picked up a glossy cover and become an essential magazine for anyone interested in alternative music. #3 interviews Coil, Vittore Baroni and Skin Chamber (aka Controlled Bleeding) and has articles on WMTID, Nitzer Ebb, Stress and Konstruktivists. #4 interviews Master/Slave Relationship, Pankow, Numb, and has articles on Can, Karl Blake and WaxTrax! As well as a huge review section there's now a clued-up regular column *Onslaught*, devoted to grunge/noise bands. It has its faults, but you really **do** need a copy!

N.D. #15 (48pp A5, $2.50 US, $4.50 elsewhere, N.D., PO Box 4144, Austin, TX 78765, USA)

Maybe it's a zeitgeist or something, but Zoviet France and Asmus Tietchens certainly seem to be flavour-of-the-month at the moment. As well as very informative interviews with those two, *N.D.* #15 talks to THU20, Justine, electronic music journalist Jorge Munnshe and mail-artist Al Ackerman. There are also enough reviews and audio / mail-art contacts to keep most people busy until the end of the century, were they so inclined. Consistently excellent.

Network News Spring 1992 (24pp A5, £1.50 from Earthly Delights)

As well as the latest news from the Nocturnal Emissions camp, this issue includes an interview with filmmaker Charlotte Bill, reviews, bizarre clippings from various places and a masturbation quiz. Pretty insubstantial for £1.50, but worth getting for NE fans.

The Open Eye #1 (40pp A4, £1.40, Open Eye, c/o Bookmarks, 265 Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park, London N4 2DE)

"Challenging media censorship" is *The Open Eye*'s subtitle. In the debut issue there's a story of a Belgrano-related Falklands cover up, a discussion of the Gulf War and the New World Order, articles on the suppression of cancer treatments, the blacklisting Economic League, covert FBI activities and European secret armies such as 'Gladio'. A refreshing attempt to challenge received wisdom, it deserves support.

Plop Art #1 & #3 (8pp A6, unpriced, MT Publications, Muggenhoferstr. 39, 8500 Nurnberg, Germany)

Deeply essential, these are little drawings using inkstains and pen, with a rather morbid Freudian subject matter. You need them, honest.

RéR Quarterly Vol.3 #3 (64pp A4, available from These Records; or ReR Megacorp, 19-23 St Saviour's Road, London SW2 5HP)

The latest issue of this well-respected magazine (which also accompanies a Quarterly record, for those interested) includes an amusing article by Alan Jenkins on *How to be in a Pop Group*, discussion of the potential for improvisation using synthesisers, fiction, a very interesting article on Fluxus and other musical theatre by Roger Sutherland, thoughts on "alternative spaces" and aesthetic philosophy by Chris Cutler. Some of it can be a bit far removed from the sharp end of musical practice, but it's usually a thought-provoking read.

Resonance #1 (32pp A5, 60p + postage, from Orgone Records)

A lowkey and friendly little zine, ranging from art and poetry through to information on groups like Survival International, and brief articles on subjects like careers, apples, vivisection, Bolivian debt etc. Plus some great criticism of New World Cassettes by Norman Jope, and plenty of contact addresses.

Revue et Corrigée #10 & #11(36pp A4, 20FF, 25 rue Docteur Bordier, 38100 Grenoble, France; also stocked by Odd Size)

If you're interested in new music, and read French, don't hesitate to get hold of *Revue et Corrigée*. Professionally produced, #10 features an article on Nicholas Collins, interview with Ghédalia Tazartes, an article on Arto Lindsay's involvement in the NY new music scene, pieces on Canadian experimental cinema and Sordide Sentimental, a short survey of Eastern European music, and plenty of reviews and news. #11 interviews Pascal Comelade and Gordon Monahan, listens to Giancarlo Toniutti, quickly surveys electronic music in Spain, and plenty more besides.

Rubberneck #9 (28pp A5, 50p + SAE, from 21 Denham Drive, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 6LT)

In an attempty to promoted improvised music, Rubberneck #9 interview six such musicians: singer Vanessa Mackness, percussionist Paul Lovens, electronicist Pat Thomas, violinist Alexander Balanescu, trombonist Yves Robert, and guitarist Derek Bailey. If you're interested in any of the musicians you should pick it up. If you're not, it may well prove a suitable introduction to the field.

Sid Watches Telly (16pp A5, £16.95 - although that may be just possibly be a misprint!, The Runciter Corporation, 7 Boyne Road, Lewisham, London SE13 5AL)

Ho yus, he does. A classic of graphic novel postmodernism. No home complete without one. Hip black humour in comicstrip form.

Smile #1 (20pp A4, very small type!, 50p + postage, Academy 23, Box 4, 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8)

Produced by members of Academy 23, this is a densely packed magazine filled with art, fiction, and other writing. There's an apparently well researched article on British fascism between 1932 & 1940, which attempts to refute criticisms of Oswald Moseley and his allies, a variety of thoughtful attacks on consumer culture, the family and other great institutions, a polemic in favour of being macho, and plenty more. It's intelligent and very provocative, even if occasionally too controversial for its own sake, and sometimes displays an astounding ignorance of basic logic. But anyway, well worth reading.

Soft Watch #2 (256pp A4, £3 + £2.05 postage, A. Burnham, 70 Old Hinckley Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 0AB)

Factsheet Five is a magazine that was almost invariably described as indispensable to anyone interested in the underground publishing scene. Since its change of ownership, that no longer appears to be the case, but *Soft Watch* deserves the same praise. I've never seen a fatter collection of reviews and contact listings for experimental (mainly industrial) music, and I'd be surprised if you have. Send an SAE for information now! Indispensable! Oh yes, this issue also comes with two sampler cassettes, one from the *Funfundvierzig* label and one covering a tiny selection of the other music covered by *Soft Watch*.

Spot the Bear #1 (20pp A4, 50p from Cordelia Records, £1 outside Europe)

"All the latest news about Pink Floyd including reviews and an interview". Well, like any fanzine you need to know **something** about the people it covers in order to appreciate it properly, but unlike most you don't necessarily need to **like** those people. Along with loads of surreal illustrations and a Cordelia Records mail order catalogue, this contains more concentrated piss-taking of the Floyd than you're likely to find anywhere else. The next issue will "almost certainly be about some other group".

Szemétellep #2 (48pp A5, trade?, Bathory Gabor, Paskomliget Ut 55 VII 29, 1156 Budapest, Hungary)

Your guess is as good as mine as to the contents, unless you read Hungarian of course. Punk-fuelled layout, and the bans covered **appear** to range from punk through to noisier, more experimental types. It certainly seems to be evidence of plenty of activity, even if the Hungarian TV listings for *Dallas* are hardly evidence of any cultural revolution!

Vital #22 (20pp A5, Frans de Waard, Opaalstraat 19, 6534 XK Nijmegen, The Netherlands)

Short but sweet. #22 interviews Robert Ashley and profiles Direction Music and the Logos Foundation. There's a critical look at the works of Pierre Schaeffer, a few reviews, and a discussion of "The Absurdity of Copyright" which should be of interest to anyone intrigued by this issue's plagiarism article.

The Wire #99 (76pp A4, £1.95, newsagents)

They don't need the publicity, but so what? Over the last year or two, *Wire* magazine has broadened its coverage considerably from its upmarket jazz base, presumably for commercial reasons. In the process, it has expanded its interests into lots of interesting new areas. Hiding amongst this issue's reviews are the likes of Laibach, Cabaret Voltaire, Thomas Köner and Graham Fitkin. Articles cover Negativland, the Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, ambient music, the music industry and Why It Must Be Destroyed, the London Musician's Collective and an interesting history of musical "troublemakers". It's well written and generally thought-provoking. A liking for jazz and new music helps, but now's the time to start looking at *Wire* again.

Worthy but Dull #0 (4pp A5, priceless, Out of Order Order, PO Box 1471, London N5 2LY)

A brief couple of pages of news for industrial music fans. Latest releases, contacts etc. Worth reading.

ΠΑΠΑΡΙ #11 (28pp A4, exchange?, Alex Z, Iras 3A, 145 65 Ekali, Athens, Greece / Α ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟ, ΗΡΑΕ 3Α, 14565 ΑΟΗΝΑ)

It's all Greek to me of course (the title is "Papari" in Roman letters), but Alex's zine includes amongst other things articles on Scientology, Peter Greenaway, political struggle in New York's Tompkins Square park, the Gulf War's "new world order" and an interview with the band Trottel.

Spaceman (t-shirt, £12 or £15 long sleeved, Ben Allen, 117a Great Victoria St., Belfast, N.Ireland)

* * * Out of alphabetical order because it's not a zine at all. How do you review a t-shirt? Description: collage of a doll-like spaceman floating above the earth. Comment: vibrant colours, great sense of design. Opinion: very cool. Unlike band or slogan t-shirts it suits every possible occasion, while looking twice as good as most of them. Ben does a variety of others too, and they're all bold, striking designs. * * *

All reviews by Brian Duguid, except **DK** - Donna Klemm.

"Systems Music" is a term which has been used to describe the work of composers who concern themselves with sound continuums which evolve gradually, often over very long periods of time. The most well-known of these composers are Steve Reich, Philip Glass, and La Monte Young. The most striking feature of their work is repetitiveness or stasis. Their works contain little or no variation of pitch, tempo, dynamics or timbre. Certainly, their work exhibits virtually none of the characteristic concerns of traditional Western music, such as harmonic movement, key modulation or thematic development.

steve reich

The listener is invited, not to follow a complex musical "argument", but to concentrate upon a slowly changing sound and focus with microscopic awareness on different aspects of it. For such listeners such intense concentration has produced pyschological states comparable to drug-induced euphoria or meditative trance. However, Young is probably the only composer for whom such effects are of primary importance. Significantly, he is also the only composer whose music is entirely devoid of rhythmic pulse, consisting mostly of combinations of drones. Reich, by contrast, has explored the different ways in which a rhythmic figure can move out of phase with itself, while Glass has used rhythmic figures which increase or decrease in length as the piece progresses. Common to all three is the fact that their music avoids any sense of climax, developme or directionality. Their pieces are either cyclical in form or static. A typical Rei piece will commence with two or more musicians playing a rhythmic pattern unison. Gradually, they move out of phase with each other - initially by, say, quarter note - and secondary rhythms are generated by the way in which tl off-parallel rhythms intermesh. The process is continued until the players a again in unison - a cyclical rather than a developmental form. Alternatively, piece may involve a process of expansion which is theoretically limitless, as the case with Reich's *Four Organs* where a single chord is gradually stretch out to a duration of several minutes.

Systems composers appear to have worked largely outside the mainstreams of both European and American music, drawing inspiration instead from various ethnic musical forms - Ghanian and Balinese music in Reich's case, Japanese Gagaku in the case of Young. Many other influences can be discerned. Such non-Western musical forms, as Young has observed *(1)*, involve stasis in contrast to climax or directionality. But systems music also relates to some aspects of contemporary Western music. Young has cited the "unchanging chord" in Schoenberg's *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, as well as Webern's technique of repeating the same pitches in different octave placements *(2)*; equally he acknowledges the influence of Machaut and plainchant. Glass, on the other hand, studied with Nadia Boulanger and Ravi Shankar, and acknowledges the influences of Bach and Indian music.

Of the three it is perhaps Reich whose music most decisively repudiates the Western classical tradition. Works such as *Drumming* relate more to African tradition than to either Varese or Cage. Nevertheless, Reich's music developed

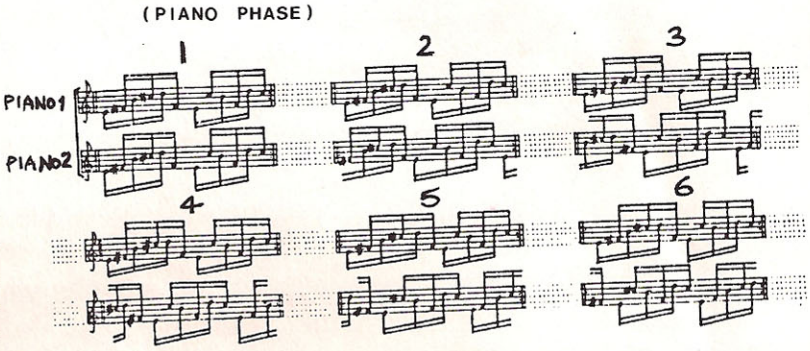
By Roger Sutherland.

very much as a reaction to European serialism as well as American indeterminacy. In his critique of these systems Reich makes similar observations to those made by composers like Xenakis *(3)* and Pousseur *(4)*. Xenakis had observed that in serial music there is a discrepancy between method and auditory result; for while the compositional method is highly mathematical, the outward impression is one of randomness. Pousseur likewise observed that "where the most abstract constructions have been employed ... one has the impression of finding oneself in the presence of the consequences of an aleatory free play". Reich extends this criticism to indeterminate music as well. He argues that in both cases one cannot hear the process by which the music was constructed. In the case of serialism one cannot follow the permutations of the twelve note series - the retrogrades and inversions destroy any recognisable melodic content. Similarly, in Cage's music one cannot hear the chance operations which determine the choice and disposition of notes. He writes: "The process of using the I Ching or observing the imperfections in manuscript paper cannot be heard when listening to music composed that way. The compositional process and the sounding music have no audible connection." *(5)*

In "Music as a Gradual Process" (1968) Reich advocates the use of compositional processes which are clearly audible to the listener. He argues that in order to facilitate closely detailed listening a musical process must happen extremely gradually, like the movement of the minute hand on a watch or the slow trickling of sand through an hour glass. The first type of gradual process which Reich explored was that of moving a rhythmic pattern out of phase with itself. This idea developed out of Reich's experiments with tape music. In 1965 he recorded the voice of a black preacher in San Francisco. Afterwards in the studio, he selected a short phrase and ran two tape loops of it on supposedly identical tape machines. Because of minute differences between the two machines the phrase was heard marginally out of synchronisation with itself. He then began to control this discrepancy by delaying one spool with his thumb, but to such an infinitesimal degree that pitch was not affected. Out of these experiments came two tape pieces: *It's Gonna Rain* (using the preacher's voice) and *Come Out* (1966) in which the single phrase "Come out to show them" is recorded on two channels, first in unison, and then with channel two beginning to move ahead. As the phrase begins to shift a gradually increasing reverberation is heard which slowly passes into a sort of canon or round. Eventually the two voices divide into four and then eight. Gradually, the intelligibility of the voices is destroyed - one hears only a constantly changing polyphony of rhythmic elements.

Reich's first attempt to apply the phasing process within an instrumental context was *Piano Phase* (1967). Here a twelve note even semiquaver melody consisting of five different modal pitches is set up in unison with itself on two pianos. The lead player gradually speeds up until he has moved one sixteenth ahead. The dotted lines in the score indicate the movement of the second pianist

(PIANO PHASE)



and the consequent shift of phase relation between himself and the first pianist.

The process is continued, with the second pianist gradually becoming an eighth (3), a dotted eigth (4), a quarter (5) and so on ahead of the first until he finally passes through a cycle of twelve relations and comes back into unison at (1) again. By this simple mechanical method Reich discovered "a completely new way of playing, thus allowing one to become totally absorbed in listening while one played" *(6)*. In a 1969 performance of the work by Richard Teitelbaum and Frederic Rzewski *Piano Phase* was adapted for piano and synthesiser. Here the subtle timbral differences between the two instruments helped to emphasise the shifting interplay between the two off-parallel rhythms. As the synthesiser moved ahead of the piano a substratum of elusive sub-melodies and secondary rhythms was generated - a psychoacoustic impression which was both mesmerising and mildly disquieting, rather like the after-images which appear on the surface of abstract paintings which deploy the overlapping of strong colours.

The other type of gradual process employed by Reich involves the progressive augmentation of note values. This idea too developed out of a tape piece - in this case one which was never realised. The piece was entitled *Slow Motion Music* (1967) and the score reads: "Gradually slow down a recorded sound without altering its pitch or timbre".

This was an extension of the idea originally explored by delaying the tape spool for *It'a Gonna Rain*. The idea was to take a tape loop, possibly of speech, and gradually slow it down to enormous length so that its harmonic and timbral qualities were expanded for a more detailed appreciation. The piece was conceived as the auditory equivalent of a slow motion film which enables one to observe details that would normally pass unnoticed.

While other composers were attracted to electronic music by its technical possibilities, Reich found the medium deficient. The idea behind slow motion music could not be realised by electronic means since, if a tape loop is slowed down by more than a fractional degree the harmonic and timbral qualities of the recorded sound will inevitably be altered. The idea could, however, be realised using live instruments. *Four Organs* (1970) was the first piece in which Reich explored this possibility. Prior to composing this piece Reich had built an electronic musical device with the aid of an engineer friend.

This device, the Phase Shifting Pulse Gate, could gradually alter the phase positions between a number of continously pulsing tones. If all tones were in phase a repeating chord would be heard. If the tones were slightly out of phase, a repeating rippling broken chord would be heard, and if moved further out of phase, a repeating melodic pattern would result. There was also a control on the device to shorten or lengthen the duration of each pulse. Reich eventually abandoned this device because of its precision, which he felt was stiff and unmusical. He felt that in any music which depends upon a regular pulse it is actually the tiny variations in that pulse created by human beings which gives vitality to the music. He writes:

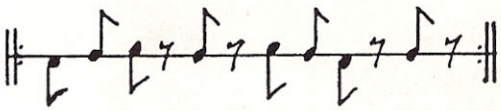
"Since I was becoming disenchanted with electronic devices, largely because of their mechanical sounding rhythms and pitches and the lack of bodily involvement in making music with them, I began to think instead of simply holding down individual notes longer and longer on an organ. Instead of the digitial clock to count ... I began to think of a musician playing a steady pulse with maracas which the organist could then count together from." *(7)*

Thus in *Four Organs* a single chord - a dominant 11th - is gradually stretched out so that was originally a vertical consonance. A maraca player lays down a steady time grid of even eighth notes throughout, thus enabling the four organists to synchronise while counting beats. The process of stretching the chord is achieved by the addition of beats, so that the chordal unit gets progressively longer. Within each chordal repetition, single notes - the chord itself is spread over three octaves among the four players - are isolated and held for longer durations. Thus what lasted a single beat in a thirteen beat bar at the beginning of the piece has by the end evolved into a chord which is held for something over 200 beats. The structural process here is completely transparent - nothing is hidden. This does not mean, however, that the music lacks an element of mystery. Reich argues:

"Even when all the cards are on the table there are still enough mysteries to satisfy all. These mysteries are the unintended psychoacoustic by-products of the intended process. These might include submelodies heard within a repeating melodic pattern, irregularities in performance, harmonics, difference tones, etc". *(8)*

Although the subject of the piece is the analysis of a single chord it could be regarded as an examination of the timbre of the organ itself. Some listeners may find that after a certain number of chordal repetitions the constituent pitches themselves appear to dissolve in a haze of shifting timbres and disembodied harmonics.

After *Piano Phase* Reich had continued his exploitation of phasing processes in *Phase Patterns* for four electric organs and *Violin Phase* for four violins (both 1967), the second of which brought him to a realisation of "the many different melodic patterns resulting from the combination of two or more identical instruments playing the same repeating pattern one or more beats out of phase with each other" *(9)*. *Drumming* (1970-1) represents the final expansion and refinement of the phasing process in Reich's work, as well as the first use of four new techniques: that of gradually substituting beats for rests (or rests for beats) within a repeating rhythmic cycle; the gradual changing of timbre while rhythm and pitch remain unaltered; the simultaneous combination of instruments of a different timbre, and the use of the human voice to become part of the musical ensemble by imitating the exact sound of the instruments. The work commences with two drummers constructing the basic rhythmic pattern of the entire piece (it lasts one hour and a half) from a single drum beat, played in a cycle of twelve beats with rests on all the other beats. Gradually, additional drum beats are substituted for the rests, one at a time, until the pattern is fully established, The reduction process is simply the reverse, where rests are substituted for beats, one at a time, until only a single beat remains. There is, then, only one basic rhythmic pattern for the entire piece:



This pattern undergoes change of phase position, pitch and timbre, but all of the performers play this pattern, or some part of it, throughout the entire piece.

The transistions between the four sections are enacted by the new instruments doubling the exact pattern of the instruments already playing. At the end of the drum section three drummers play the same rhythmic pattern out of phase with one another. Three marimbas enter softly, doubling the same pattern. The drummers gradually fade out so that the rhythmic pattern is maintained with a gradual change of timbre. Similarly at the end of the marimba section three marimbas are doubled by three glockenspiels in their lowest range so that the process of maintaining the melodic and rhythmic pattern while altering the timbre is repeated. The sections are not demarcated by changes in key. Reich's aim in *Drumming* is to demonstrate that it is possible to maintain the same key for some considerable time if instead there are significant rhythmic developments as well as timbral changes to supply variety.

Much of the interest of the piece, however, lies in the realm of "unintended psychoacoustic by-products of the intended process". These include comple cross-rhythms which result from the hocket-like combination of a number of very simple rhythmic patterns. These rhythms continually shift and change as the phase positions alter. Other psychoacoustic impressions may be perceptible to the attentive listener. For example, the continual repetition may cause the listener to lose all sense of rhythm and melody, hearing the colour of the drum sounds in a more abstract and disembodied way. Similarly the glockenspiel part may progressively blur all sense of definite pitch so that one hears only high, dissonant harmonics or, on a lower plateau, the constant drone caused by the rattle of wooden mallets on metal keys. Like the transient illusions of Op art, these psychoacoustic impressions vary continually. The astute listener will hear the music polyphonically - con-

Steve Reich

stantly shifting attention between the superimposed musical layers and their interpenetrations.

However, Reich's primary concern is not the investigation of such impressions. His aim is to make the structural processes of the music audible and to devise audible processes which will simultaneously determine the note to note procedure and the overall form. This is not the case with serialism since although it does predetermine the note to note procedure (ie the twelve notes must be kept in the same order throughout) the order of permutations - and hence the overall structure - are not. Reich's aim is to eliminate any room for compositional manoeuvre once the initial parameters have been set up. He writes:

"Musical processes can give one a direct control with the impersonal and also a kind of complete control ... by this I mean: by running this material through that process I completely control all that results but I also accept all that results without changes." *(9)*

Like Cage, Reich seems to be concerned with transcending his own personal taste to achieve a kind of objectivity. If changes or embellishments are made during rehearsal they are collaborative, involving all the musicians in Reich's ensemble. During the rehearsal of *Drumming* the three vocalists, including Reich himself, selected certain unintended patterns which resulted from the phase shifting of the basic rhythm and decided collectively on an order in which to vocalise them. For Reich there is no element of self-expression here - the players are merely drawing out the rhythms which are latent in the music.

Reich feels that it is important to distinguish his music from some currently popular modal forms of music, such as Indian classical and drug-oriented rock and roll. These musical forms may make us aware of minute sound details because in being modal (constant key centre, hypnotically droning and repetitious) they naturally focus on these details rather than on key modulation, counterpoint or other peculiarly Western devices. He stresses, however, that these idioms are more or less strict frameworks for improvisation - they are not processes. The distinctive feature of a musical process is that it simultaneously determines the note to note procedure and the overall form. "One can't improvise in a musical process", Reich argues. "The two concepts are mutually exclusive".

Reich's later works, however, are less strictly predetermined and show a greater flexibility of compositional approach. In *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ* (1973) and *Music for Eighteen Musicians* (1974-6) he abandons simple phasing processes in favour of the more elaborate techniques of *Drumming* and the processes of rhythmic augmentation first used in *Four Organs*. His most recent works are less minimalist in approach, showing a greater variety of rhythmical change than the earlier pieces and a stronger sense of harmonic movement. In *Tehillim* (1981), which is based on Hebrew psalms, and *The Desert Music* (1983), based on poems by William Carlos Williams, Reich makes a limited use of key modulation and gives far greater independence and expressiveness to the vocal parts.

While Reich's earlier music involves a decisive rejection of the Western classical tradition, his later work shows an increasing tendency to accomodate aspects of that tradition, often in combination with Eastern and Afro-Asian stylistic elements. In *Music for Eighteen Musicians* chords lasting initially twenty seconds are expanded for entire five minute section "rather as a single note for the cantus firmus of 12th century organum might be stretched out as a harmonic centre by Perotin" *(10)*. As well as Perotin, Reich feels an increasinf affinity with Debussy, whose non-functional harmony seems very close to his own, especially in terms of harmonic ambiguity. He has also likened his use of a chordal suspension technique in *Variations for Wind, Strings and Keyboards* (1979) to Bartok's Second Piano Concerto. Other later works, such as *Tehillim* show a strong feeling for tonality. It's last movement "affirms the key of D major as the basic tonal centre of the work after considerable harmonic ambiguity earlier" *(11)*. On the other hand, *Sextet* (1985) exploits ambiguities of rhythm and metre which are more reminiscent of African music. One feels, in listening to Reich's more recent work, the sense of a dialectic between Eastern and Western styles and between ancient and modern traditions. In this respect Reich seems to have given an entirely new interpretation to Stockhausen's idealistic vision of "a unified world music", one which combines elements of the music "of all lands and races" *(12)*.

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Come Out / It's Gonna Rain / Clapping Music / Piano Phase (Elektra Nonesuch 7559-79169-2)

Drumming, Parts I-IV (Elektra Nonesuch 7559-79170-2)

Music for Mallet Instruments, Voice and Organ / Four Sections (Elektra Nonesuch 7559-79220-2)

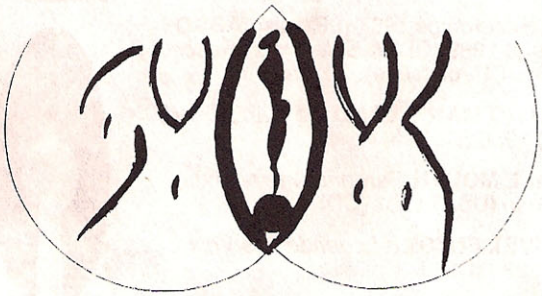
Sextet / Six Marimbas (Elektra Nonesuch 7559-79138-2)

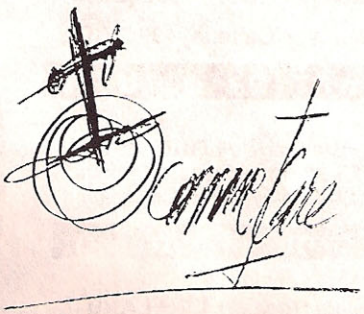
The Desert Music (Elektra Nonesuch 7559-79101-2)

BIOGRAPHY

Reich was born in New York in 1936. He graduated from Cornell University with honours in Philosophy in 1957 and studied composition at the Juillard School of Music from 1958 to 1961. He then attended Mills College in California where he studied with Milhaud and Berio, receiving his M.A. in music in 1963. In 1970 he studied drumming with a master drummer of the Ewe tribe at the Institute of African Studies in Ghana. During 1973 and 1974 he studied Balinese Gamelan Music at the American Society for Eastern Arts in Berkeley, California.

presents





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:zoviet*france:

There wasn't room for this last issue, so to accompany the Zoviet*France interview from last time, here's a little discography ...

GARISTA *Soviet France* 1982 (cassette); *Singing Ringing* 1985 (cassette); *Charrm* 1990 (CD, LP, cassette).

untitled ("Hessian Record") *Red Rhino Records* 1982 (LP); *Charrm* 1990 (CD, LP).

NORSCH *Red Rhino Records* 1983 (LP); *Charrm* 1990 (CD).

MOHNOMISHE *Red Rhino Records* 1983 (LP); *Charrm* 1990 (CD).

EOSTRE *Red Rhino Records* 1984 (LP); *Charrm* 1990 (CD).

POPULAR SOVIET SONGS AND YOUTH MUSIC *Red Rhino Records / Singing Ringing* 1985 (cassette).

GRIS *No Man's Land* (West Germany) 1985 (LP).

MISFITS, LOONY TUNES AND SQUALID CRIMINALS *Red Rhino Records* 1986 (LP).

GESTURE SIGNAL THREAT *Red Rhino Records* 1986 (cassette).

LOH LAND *Staaltape* (Netherlands) 1987 (cassette).

A FLOCK OF ROTATIONS *Red Rhino Records* 1987 (LP).

ASSAULT AND MIRAGE *Red Rhino Records* 1987 (cassette).

SHOUTING AT THE GROUND *Red Rhino Records* 1988 (CD, LP); *Charrm* 1990 (CD, LP).

JUST AN ILLUSION *Staaltape* (Netherlands) 1990 (CD).

LOOK INTO ME *Charrm* 1990 (LP, CD).

SHADOW, THIEF OF THE SUN *DOVentertainment* (Canada) 1991 (CD).

VIENNA 1990 *Charrm* 1991 (CD).

Compilation Appearances

"Ram" **RITUAL: LANDS END** *Touch* 1985 (cassette).

"Sprey" **BAD ALCHEMY #4** *Bad Alchemy* (Germany) 1986 (cassette / magazine).

"Le Mur Mûr Nu" **FIGHT!** *Cathexis Recordings* 1987 (LP); also **ABSOLUTE** *Parade Amoureuse* (Germany) 1989 (CD) & *Soleilmoon Recordings* (USA) 1989 (CD, cassette).

"First Vigil" **A CLASSIC GUIDE TO NO MAN'S LAND** *No Man's Land* (Germany) 1988 (CD).

"White Dusk" **A BEAD TO A SMALL MOUTH** *Barooni* (Netherlands) 1989 (LP) & *Soleilmoon* (USA) 1991 (CD).

"Something This Beautiful" **MOUVEMENTS** *La Legende des Voix* (France) 1990 (CD).

"Voice Print Identification" **OBJEKT 4** *Ladd-Frith* (USA) 1990 (CD).

"Fugitive" **DEATH OF VINYL** *DOVentertainment* (Canada) 1991 (CD).

Miscellaneous

:z*f: music is used as soundtracks to Stan Brakhage's **LOUD VISUAL NOISES** and Mark Mushet's **TRANSIENTS #1**. In 1991, :z*f: remixed Digital Poodle's **SOUL CRUSH**, on a 12" from *Shadow Canada*.

Forthcoming

Retrospective CD from *The Grey Area* of *Mute Records*; **LOH LAND** reissue on CD from *Staaltape*; **GRIS** reissue on CD from *No Man's Land*; 4-hour DAT of new recordings from *Soleilmoon*; Cassette of new material packaged in concrete by *E'ostrate*; and a CD collection of "short secular hymns" on *Barooni*.

Plus compilation appearances from *Hypnagogia*, *TOTAL*, *Direction Music*, *Work in Progress* and *Johnny Blue*.

hit the floor by MX

Blink and you'll miss them! All those completely brilliant mindfuck techno / hardcore dance records, I mean. Acts come and go so fast even the DJs have a terrible problem keeping up with all the crucial cuts. As I intimated last time, however, there are always certain labels that can be relied upon to deliver the goods again and again and again.

The Rising High label is one such which always seems to come up with a new twist on ultra-hard techno. It is run by the amiable Caspar Pound, whose first group A Homeboy, A Hippie & A Funki Dredd really smashed down the barriers between techno and noise with the classic *Total Confusion* [Tam Tam TTT 031]. Caspar's solo work as the Hypnotist recently produced the current scene's anthem *Hardcore, You Know The Score* [RSN 13], and his latest terror blast *Head Strong 4 Life* (under the pseudonym Dub Collective [RSN 21] is somehow even rougher still. It stomps so hard it makes *James Brown is Dead* sound like *I Should Be So Lucky*. As with previous masterpieces like *The House is Mine*, Caspar's work combines storming rhythms with distorted samples and swerving electronics that writhe back and forth through your skull. Check out the various remixes too, if you can find them; most of them bear precious little resemblance to their originals, or indeed to reality as a whole as we know it.

Other acts to love to death on Rising High include Berlin nutters the Bug, apparently something to do with West Bam. Even more than their startling debut, *The Bug EP* [RSN 10], their new single *Bug 04* [RSN 20] shows just how far you can take electronic distortion and still - just about - maintain momentum and a beat. The bizarre Earth Leakage Trip, meanwhile follow a more ambient path to produce deeply atmospheric soundscapes littered with samples and waves of noise. Their latest, the *Virtuality EP* [RSN 17], is a tremendous follow-up to their stunning debut, the *Psychotronic EP*, released last year on Moving Shadow [SHADOW 1].

To cap it all, Rising High have just released a compilation of some of their finest moments. The modestly titled *Techno Classics Volume One* [RSNCD 1] is a 75-minute CD or double LP selection from the output of the label's best artists, including the Hypnotist and Earth Leakage Trip, plus Mike Ash's too-fast-for-mere-words Interface and the peculiar Friends Lovers and Family, the revitalised HHFD, Phobia, the ambient Irresistible Force and the dope-driven Project One. Must-Buy Selection #1.

I mentioned the Kickin' label's Messiah last issue. Since then, the label has released their all-time monster classic *There Is No Law* [KICK 10], a rampaging cement-mixer of robotic voices, Hendrix samples, juddering machine-driven bass lines and general purpose techno mayhem. Search out and buy forthwith! Almost as essential is their newest sonic assault, *Temple of Dreams* [KICK 12] which runs a dreamy sample from *Song to the Siren* over a Shamen-style beat to splendid effect.

This was followed shortly afterwards by the equally desirable *Evil Surrounds Us* [KICK 13], created by the plainly doolally Wishdokta, which melds heavy drum patterns, samples from G'n'R's *Welcome to the Jungle* and a voice repeatedly howling "You're accused of being in league with the devil!" into a raging hurricane of sound and fury!

More recently, *Beans and Barley* by Third Mind [KICK 14] (no relation, as far as I can tell, to the tedious London-based ethereal / industrial record label) is proving to be another classic floor-filler. It starts, against all expectations, with a plodding old folk song before swerving into a thunderous scream-along rave stomper interweaved with pulsating sequencer lines that sound like the sort of noise I always wished Front 242 would make if they could only get dirty enough.

Once again, for all those too remotely situated, or too damn useless to venture into their local dance or indie

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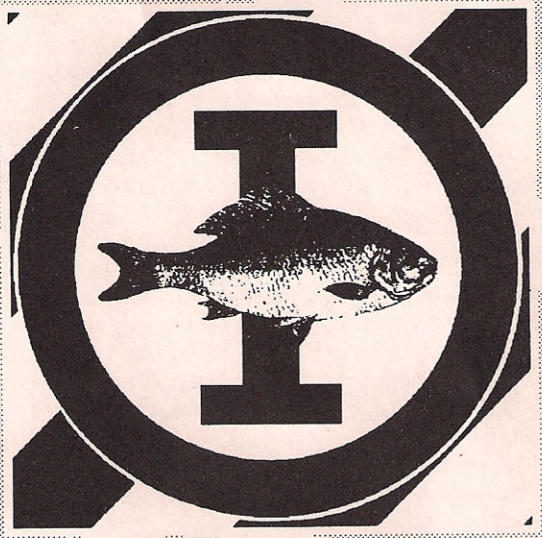

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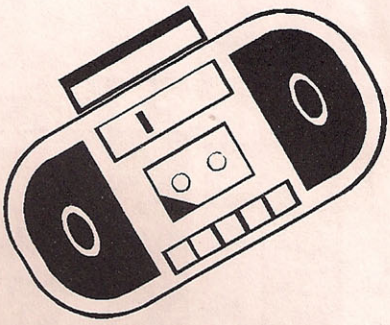


shop to buy these when they were around, there is a 'greatest hits' compilation from the label. Miss *Champion Sound - the Best of Kickin Volume One* [KICKLP 1] at your peril: ten tracks of storming industrial hardcore, including all your future favourites by Messiah, Zero Zero, Wishdokta, Kicksquad and the Scientist. Naturally, it is Must-Buy Recommendation #2.

The Outer Rhythm / R&S tie-ins are producing more great records too. C J Bolland's awesome *Ravesignal III* [RS 9131] includes the heart-stopping caustic electronic glide of 'Horsepower' and the no less brutal 'Mindstorm'. It has jsut been picked up by OR for UK release, and is therefore this issue's Must-Buy Recommendation #3.

Furthermore, due shortly over here from OR is the strangely named Jam & Spoon's even stranger *Tales From a Danceographic Ocean* [RS 9203], which veers from the Twin Peaks-sampling acid burn-out of 'My First Fantastic FF' to the deeply ambient, Spanish guitar-covered rippling 'Stella'. It is a more acquired taste, perhaps, but just the thing for a funny sunny day.

Finally this issue, Jumpin' & Pumpin' - despite having as bad a label name as I've come across - continue to throw out the occasional great record. *Slammin'* by Pandemic [12TOT 22] is a neat splicing of *Mentasm / Charly* swerves with more current hardcore stomps and piano breaks. Flag's *Eruption* [12TOT 20] is a slightly milder, more hypnotic offering, closer in sound to the purer electronics of US techno, but equally highly recommended.

However, and this really is the one to crawl backwards over broken glass to track down at any cost, there is another J&P release. It is by Future Sound of London. It is called *Papua New Guinea*. It is on 12TOT 17. It should be available everywhere. It was promo-ed last year but has now properly reappeared with an additional 12-minute remix by Graham Massey of 808-State. It sets a sample from Dead Can Dance's *Dawn of the Iconoclast* over a brutal ragga bass-line. It is my Must-Buy Recommendation #4. It is gorgeous.

Report from the dancefloor frontline by **MX**.

the unacceptable face of PLAGIARISM?

All words stolen, ideas ripped off, and meanings mercilessly rearranged by Brian Duguid.

1: Pop Parody Panic

*"This is bullshit. Nobody cares. These guys are from England and who **gives** a shit?"*

Well, so says **Casey Kasem**, sampled on a fun little record bearing the letter "U" and the numeral "2". That loveable San Francisco-based band **Negativland** were at it again. Their single *U2*, released by SST in 1991, takes the Irish band's track *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For*, from the album *The Joshua Tree*, and subjects it to savage parody. The result? A neat little single and a nasty big lawsuit from U2's label, Island Records, and their publishers, Warner-Chappell music.

Negativland have been around for over a decade now, mixing bizarre music and found tapes since their eponymous debut album from 1980. They've grown in sophistication quite considerably since then. In 1987, SST and Swiss label Rec Rec jointly released their fourth album, *Escape From Noise*, a classic piece of satirical tape-collage. It's at the same time a wide-ranging survey of the omnipresence of noise in modern society, and a cheap but witty comment on everything from commercial radio to religion. Maybe not that big a jump.

One track from this, *Christianity is Stupid*, led to Negativland's biggest media exposure so far, when they claimed in a press release that the track was linked to the David Brom axe murder case, where 16-year old David Brom murdered his parents and two siblings. The storm of media attention that this bogus claim generated was the foundation of one side of the band's next release, the *Helter Stupid* album. This incorporates news and other recordings related to the media's interest in the Negativland / Brom link. It also devotes its attention to other well known cases where "rock bands" have been accused of inspiring murders, and even incorporates some satanic backmasking of its own.

It's a reasonably sophisticated, and certainly very entertaining examination of the way in which the media distorts and manipulates news stories, even if it begins to look as if the band were spending a little bit too much time navel-gazing.

But if the *Christianity is Stupid* track and its aftermath threw Negativland into the press spotlight, then the *U2* single did so even more markedly. The single displays the "U2" in huge letters over a picture of the U-2 spyplane, and with "Negativland" far less prominently featured. Island Records claimed that this "constitutes a transparent use of deceptive packaging designed to dupe U2's millions of fans throughout the United States into believing that this ... is the widely-anticipated new album by U2". In addition, they took the view that Negativland's version of *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For* might damage U2's "good name", implying that anyone buying the record might even believe it to be the real U2.

Unable to afford to go all the way to court, Negativland and SST reluctantly agreed to Island's demands. These include:

Everyone who received a copy of the record has been asked to return it, and warned not to promote, distribute or sell it.

All remaining copies of the single, including those returned, are to be given to Island, to be destroyed.

Copyright in the recordings to be assigned to Island and Warner-Chappell.

Payment of $25,000 and half the wholesale proceeds from singles sold and not returned.

All materials used in the production of the single (such as manufacturing plates) to be handed over to Island Records.

Negativland have responded as follows:

"Our single deals, in part, with our perception of the group U2 as an international cultural phenomenon, and therefore particularly worthy of artistic comment and criticism. Island's legal action thoroughly ignores the possibility that any such artistic right or inclination might exist. Apparently, Island's sole concern in this act of censorship is their determination to control the marketplace, as if the only reason to make records is to make money.

"This issue is not a contest among equals. U2 records are among the most popular in history: *The Joshua Tree* sold over 5 million copies. Negativland releases usually sell about 10,000 to 15,000 copies each. (We could not) afford the tremendous costs involved in fighting for our rights in court. Island could."

SST attempted to contact U2's management, jokingly asking them to play a benefit concert to help out Negativland. U2's manager, not having heard the single, told Rockbeat magazine: "If it's good enough, maybe they'll put it on a b-side or something". U2 evidently did get to hear about the single, for according to president of Island UK, Chris Blackwell: "I have been getting a huge amount of hassle from the members of U2 not to press for payment".

SST decided to get some more attention by producing and selling "Kill Bono" t-shirts. Negativland have since released a press release disassociating themselves from SST entirely, apparently feeling the t-shirt to be "boneheaded". This may seem like surprising sensitivity from a band that exploited the David Brom tragedy for all it was worth. Negativland also claim that SST were demanding that the band take 100% responsibility for Island's damages. As a result, Negativland say they have parted company with SST, and have attacked the label for sharing the exploitative attitude of the corporate labels SST usually claims to oppose. SST's usual slogan is "Corporate Rock Sucks". Negativland suggests this should read "Corporate SST Still Sucks Rock".

All this might seem simple enough, but given their record with *Christianity is Stupid*, I'm inclined not to take Negativland press releases at face value. They have released a further, supposedly final, single on SST, titled *Guns*. Musically, it's just more of the same sound-collage parody of America's obsession with firearms. However, the band dedicate the single "to the members of our favourite Irish rock band, their record label, and their attorneys". At the same time, the cover uses the same styling and imagery as the *U2* single. The *U2* title is replaced by the word *Guns*, and a large revolver is shown pointed directly at a U-2 spyplane. Any connection with the "Kill Bono" t-shirts? Surely not.

2: The Acceptable Face of Plagiarism

Negativland point out in one of their many press releases that "creative theft" has been an important part of folk, blues, jazz and rock music for a long time, and suggest that it's time the music business recognised this. "Ownership" is an outdate concept. Music that we do not own and have little control over is part of our everyday environment, through adverts, muzak, television etc. And the advent of cheap recording technology has meant that sounds supposedly owned by other people can be grabbed from the airwaves, manipulated and distributed with ease. These are facts of life. It's unlikely that we'll ever return to the past, although the music industry still behaves as if this were somehow possible.

Negativland adopt what they see as a responsible attitude against this background. They don't simply copy other people's work wholesale, or bootleg it. They even agree that "every artist is due whatever rewards he or she can reap from his or her own products". Defending their *U2* single, they call upon legal precedent: they believe that under U.S. law, their use of samples from *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For* is a legally protected "fair use", as it was for the purpose of parody, comment and criticism. John Oswald (see below) made the same point regarding his banned *Plunderphonic* recording.

It's not that Negativland are doing anything illegal, the band say, it's just that they lack the financial resource to prove the point in the courts.

One thing that Negativland have repeatedly returned to in their defence is that they deserve protection for what they do as "artists". They argue that "art" is whatever "artists" do: and in the late twentieth century, as at any time in history, artists simply reflect their environment. "Art needs to begin to acquire an equal footing with marketers in court", they say. "How about a thorough revamping of the antique copyright, publishing, and cultural property laws to bring them into comfortable accord with modern technology and a healthy respect for the artist's impulse to incorporate public influences?"

I see two problems with this. The first is one of simple artistic arrogance. How do you decide who is an artist and who isn't? Why is this peculiar species to be afforded such special consideration under the law? Secondly, it seems to be an attempt to move the debate onto the lawyers' own ground. Apart from the concern that "artists" are taking a big risk entangling themselves ever closer in the complexities of business and law, it seems to me that it's difficult to criticise an establishment that you're part of. Whilst I don't for one moment wish any musician to suffer Negativland's fate, I wonder whether or not it's possible that by making plagiarism acceptable, you also make it safe? If you're doing something considered socially and legally acceptable, doesn't that take the edge off your criticism? How can you retain a subversive sting unless you're commenting from the outside?

Negativland Discography

A L B U M S

1980 Negativland (Seeland 001) LP, CD

1981 "Points" (Seeland 002) LP

1983 A Big 10-8 Place (Seeland 003) LP, CD

1987 Escape From Noise (SST 133, RecRec 17) LP, MC, CD

1989 Helter Stupid (SST 252, RecRec 29) LP, MC, CD

V I D E O

1989 No Other Possibility (Seeland 005) 60 minutes VHS

S I N G L E S

1991 U2 (SST 272) 12", MC, CD [withdrawn]

1992 Guns (SST 292) 12", MC, CD

3: Pirates on the High ©s

Negativland are of course not the only group to fall foul of copyright lawyers for their extensive use of sampling-as-art. Composer John Oswald's CD, *Plunderphonic*, released in 1989, was seized and destroyed by the Canadian Recording Industry Association. The CD extensive sampling from the music of artists like The Beatles, James Brown, Metallica, Stravinsky and Michael Jackson. It was Jackson who provoked the C.R.I.A.'s action, and the CDs were withdrawn and crushed, following a threat of litigation.

Plunderphonic was produced using Oswald's own money, and distributed as *shareright*, borrowing the term used for some computer software. He was making no money from it, distributing it free to radio stations and libraries, so the C.R.I.A. could hardly accuse him of profiteering. The C.R.I.A. claimed that all they saw was "just another example of theft".

Plunderphonic is a different approach to plagiarism from that favoured by Negativland. John Oswald's music comes from a tradition of experimentation that has its roots in musique concrète: the cutting up and manipulation of recorded sounds to create new musical environments. The original concrète composers, like Pierre Henry and Pierre Schaeffer, used the sounds of the natural environment, or specially recorded noises from real life. Like, Negativland, Oswald views his natural environment as being modern media-reality. He applies his cut-ups and distortions to other people's music. He wasn't the first to do so, of course. In an article from 1987, he quotes the example of James Tenney, whose composition *Collage 1*, written in 1961, used multi-speed tape recorders and a razor blade to transform Elvis Presley's (and Carl Perkin's) *Blue Suede Shoes*. John Oswald takes this view of the rights and wrongs of plagiarism:

"The *hit parade* promenades the aural floats of pop on public display, and as curious tourists should we not be able to take our own snapshots through the crowd,

rather than be restricted to the official souvenir postcards and programmes?

"All popular music is (as is all folk music by definition), essentially, if not legally, existing in a public domain. Listening to pop music isn't a matter of choice. Asked for or not, we're bombarded by it. In its most insidious state, filtered to an incessant bass line, it seeps through apartment walls and out of the heads of *walk people*. Although people in general are making more noise than ever before, fewer people are making more of the total noise. Difficult to ignore, pointlessly redundant to imitate, how does one not become a passive recipient?"

Plunderphonics takes hold of popular music and turns it into a texture rather than a text. It's disembowelled, the entrails thrown down to see what new omens they might present. John Oswald's music attacks the musical establishment by subverting their product, turning it to his own ends.

In the pop arena, MARRS, a collaboration between members of A.R.Kane and Colourbox created the biggest copyright storm of the eighties with their single *Pump Up the Volume*, which rose to the top of the charts and into a flurry of controversy thanks to its very extensive sampling of other musicians. Although it was the single that triggered a media obsession with the ethics of sampling, it was hardly the first record ever to do it. Throughout the eighties rap and hip-hop musicians had been sampling other's records in a similar way to MARRS, with limited commercial success ensuring that they avoided the controversy. And sampling of others' work goes back far further in music history.

Classical composers have long employed the compositions of others as they're source material. Themes written by another composer are taken and reworked, explored to see what light a new artist can shed on them. In more modern times, the Beatles, now victims of sampling themselves, haven't shied away from using copyright material without permission. John Lennon's unauthorised use of TV and radio broadcasts in *Revolution No.9* was followed eventually by George Harrison's (successful) prosecution for subconsciously plagiarising the Chiffons' *He's So Fine* when writing *My Sweet Lord*. Since then, of course, the copyright industry has grown enormously, to the extent where even the use of a tiny sample of sound from another record is considered out-of-bounds and cause for a court case. That is, if the artist didn't ensure that appropriate payment was made for the sample beforehand.

Unsurprisingly, however, it's only the commercially successful who usually get involved in these copyright problems. Nobody pays any attention to the thousands of unknown artists who either use brief samples or slavishly imitate the work of others. Presumably, the copyright lawyers understand that it's not worth suing somebody for payment if they're not rich enough to pay you. The idea behind suing is of course a nonsense: do the James Brown-samplers really cost Brown any loss of income by stealing excerpts from his music? Hardly. It should be self-evident, however, that the Negativland and Oswald cases have little to do with loss of income. Michael Jackson and U2 could lose nothing as a result of *Plunderphonic* or *U2* being made available. The only issue, although it's not the one the lawyers prefer to concentrate on, is that of insult. The big labels feel insulted to see their artists being treated as objects of parody, and retaliate as heavily as possible. They use the legal system to retaliate not because it's in any way relevant to the supposed "wrong" but because it's efficient and unstoppable. Negativland would do well to realise this when they're considering the issue of modern rights for artists under the legal system. It's not the detail of the legal system that's the problem. It's the way in which that entire system functions solely as a mechanism to allow the wealthy and the powerful to have their way. Ethics and legalities are irrelevant. In both Oswald's and Negativland's cases the legal system is a sledgehammer, not a forum for argument.

Finally, a group who have not, yet, suffered as result of their art. Presumably, they didn't manage to insult anyone with it.

The Tape-beatles are a group whose entire *raison d'être* is plagiarism. One of their activities is producing the art discussion magazine, *Retrofuturism*, which deals with underground art philosophy in depth. Meanwhile, sampling pervades every level of their CD on Canadian label DOVEntertainment, *Music With Sound*: individual sounds are sampled, musical phrases sampled, and found voices inserted at opportune moments. They're closer in style and spirit to Negativland than John Oswald. They also avoid the more grating aspects of Negativland's music: the occasionally unnerving discord and the nerdy American accents. *Music With Sound* is a powerful, compelling album: a trawl through the info-swamp, an attempt to invoke meaning from apparently random data. "Don't hate us because we are brilliant", they tell us:

"*Music With Sound* is an appropriately entitled recording and complete pr*act*ical guide to the current copy*right* controversy. Not only does it include detailed examples of unregistered, transcontextualised, and copyright protected works, it also describes a world where ideas and their consequences are not ownable. The Tape-beatles compose others' output with cost-effective wit, desperately edged. They share with you traditional-classic style music, folk, rock, pop, 'musique concrète', 'third stream' and styles so far out there that copywriters wouldn't dare touch it with a ten-foot version of the constitution. Hence it is a very useful disc for anyone with copyright questions - and far more listenable than any copyright office whining about protection for 'artist's' creative or business interests."

Music With Sound is placed in the Public Domain by The Tape-beatles, accepting Negativland's assessment of the pointlessness of copyright. Viewed simply as music (rather than as a statement), I prefer it to Negativland's music or *Plunderphonics*. It's punchy, engaging material, even if thirty-one tracks in 45 minutes provides a bit much to absorb at once.

4: Plagiarists! We Are The New Breed!

"From Stockhausen onwards it has become increasingly difficult to create new music. Not because people no longer have anything to say, but because Western society has fragmented to such a degree that it is now virtually impossible to write in the style of classical, coherent compositions. That is, music held together by a single idea, or body of ideas, with each melody and movement flowing smoothly into the next. Today, thoughts seem to break apart before they are fully formed, and then turn back on themselves in a welter of contradictions, making it impossible to create music in the traditional manner.

"The major problem of twentieth-century art is the constant demand for something new and original. The consequence of this demand is that while everything appears to change, nothing actually changes. Instead there is a constant reappearance of the same half-baked ideas, using a succession of increasingly silly names. It took thousands of years to develop the symphonic form, and yet today people demand radical innovations every week. The result is that they get exactly what they deserve - insults.

"The great advantage of plagiarism as a musical method is that it removes the need for talent, and even much application. All you really need to do is select what to plagiarise. Enthusiastic beginners might like to begin by plagiarising the work of people like Negativland, John Oswald or the Tape-Beatles. A purist will choose to plagiarise their work by simple copying; but those who feel the need to express the creative side of their personality will change a few seconds here and there, or cut it up and rearrange it.

"Plagiarism is a highly creative process because with every plagiarism a new slant is added to the work. Unfortunately, the forces of order have contrived to make plagiarism of recent music illegal, making the risk of prosecution a deterrent to even the most dedicated plagiarist. However, a few sensible precautions can be used to reduce this risk. The basic rule is to take the melodies and development of a piece, without actually sampling it note for note. Cover versions are a mundane example of this. Another possibility for avoiding prosecution is to work under an assumed name, or use non-copyrighted material.

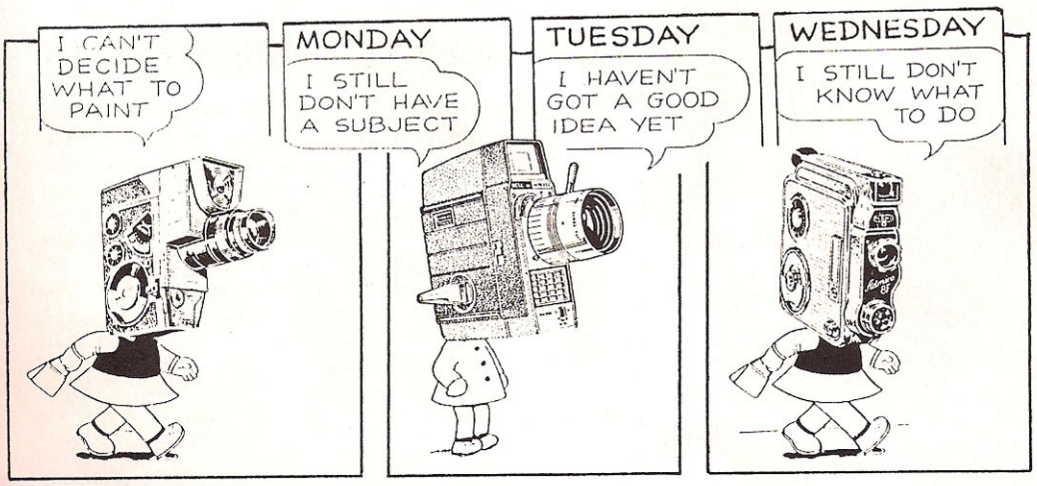
"To conclude, plagiarism saves time and effort, improves results, and shows considerable initiative on the part of the plagiarist. As a revolutionary tool it is ideally suited to the needs of the late twentieth-century. For those who find the selection of material too much of a 'creative' challenge, the remedy is to introduce a system for randomly selecting material. Let's do away once and for all with the myth of 'genius'."

Stewart Home, and others involved in similar artistic and political currents, see plagiarism differently from Negativland or John Oswald. Negativland view it as a basic technique, used to parody, satirise or comment upon their victims. As a well-established part of modern artistic practice, whether in Kathy Acker's novel *Blood and Guts in High School* or Kurt Schwitters' *Merz* collages, Negativland see it as a tool for examining aspects of their environment and recontextualising them, juxtaposing fragments to create new meanings from old. John Oswald views "plagiarism" as taking back control: imposing your own ordering on the musical data that surrounds you, rather than simply passively accepting it. The Tape-beatles are doing something similar, employing plagiarism to see what hidden meanings might lurk within the music they steal.

The Situationist International's view of plagiarism was also concerned with taking control of information, but particularly with revising that information in order to expose the mechanisms of control that order it in the first place. Their *detournement*, "the integration of present or past artistic production into a superior construction of a milieu", is best remembered by their propagandist rewording of apparently mundane cartoon strips.

Stewart Home, member of the Neoist art movement, producer of the politicised art paper *Smile* and author of plagiarist novels, including the rather silly *Pure Mania*, takes a different slant on the same idea. The above appropriation of one of Home's texts (taken from *Plagiarism - Art as Commodity and Strategies for its Negation*) points towards Home's attitude. It's an enthusiastic two-fingers towards the cultural establishment. This is what we think of your garbage.

On a more sophisticated level, it's an attempt to confront head on the capitalist, property-based philosophy that dominates the



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Western world. Ownership is all important: ownership is what allows control, and control is what allows you to exploit what you own for your own benefit. If one benefits through control, then of course others are exploited through lack of it. For someone like Stewart Home, concerned with the *inevitable* iniquities of capitalist economics, an attack on property is something worth pursuing. And if it can irritate the world's precious "artists" too, the people so possessive about their "creative talent", then so much the better.

This is plagiarism seen not as a valid tool of the artist, as Negativland would like to have it, but plagiarism as an essential tool of the revolutionary. Ownership is not seen as an absolute right but as a peculiarity of our economic and political systems, and one that needs to be challenged.

According to Bob Jones:

"Art must always emphasise the 'individuality' of ownership and creation. Plagiarism, by contrast, is rooted in social process, communality, and a recognition that society is far more than the sum of individuals (both past and present) who constitute it. In practice, social development has always been based on plagiarism (one has only to observe children to realise that advancement is 99% imitation), but this reality is mystified by the ideology of 'art'. Art itself is based on pictorial traditions built up over thousands of years, and yet art historians and critics always focus on the very minor, usually negligible, 'innovations' of each 'individual' artist."

5: A Brief Summary

Plagiarism is necessary. Progress implies it.

Selected Bibliography:

Plagiarism - Art as Commodity and Strategies for its Negation (ed. Stewart Home, Aporia Press, 1988)

Methods of Detournement (by Guy Debord and Gil Wolman, in Situationist Anthology, Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981)

Plunderphonics (by John Oswald, in Recommended Records Quarterly Vol.2 #1, November Books, 1987)

Addresses:

Negativland, 1920 Monument Blvd., MF-1, Concord, CA 94520, USA; **Negativmailorderland**, 109 Minna #391, San Francisco, CA 94105, USA; **Recommended Distribution** (John Oswald tapes and *Music With Sound*), 387 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2JL, U.K.; **The Tape-Beatles**, P.O. Box 8907, Iowa City, Iowa 52245, USA; **AK Distribution**, (material by Stewart Home), 3 Balmoral Place, Stirling FK8 2RD, U.K.; **Mark Pawson** ("Negativland is Stupid" badges, 30p each + 20p postage, all proceeds to Negativland), P.O Box 664, London E3 4QR, U.K.; **E S T** is happy to record tapes of the *U2* single, please supply a tape (min C30) plus return postage. For another 50p, I'll also throw in a "Negativland is Stupid" badge, and excerpts from *Plunderphonics* and *Music With Sound*.

reviews

As ever, the formats listed at the head of each review are not necessarily comprehensive - many items will be available on formats not listed. If you have difficulty finding anything reviewed below, get in touch and I'll see if I can help. Favourite items this time around have been noted. All addresses are Untied Kingdom unless otherwise noted. Sorry, no cover artwork: as you can see, there's a shortage of space. Reviews by: **BD** = Brian Duguid; **MG** = Marc Gascoigne; **SH** = Simon Hopkins; **MR** = Matthew Riley; **RS** = Roger Sutherland; **MW** = Mark Winkelmann; **MX** = MX.

-1348- & Stolen Government Binder Clip

En Marge (Tragic Figures TFT014) MC

I know absolutely nothing about this cassette other than the above details, and I'm not even sure I've got the artist(s) right. So I'll have to be descriptive, and that's not easy! How about "disjointed and fragmentary reworkings of the Throbbing Gristle heritage"? Could mean anything. Perhaps "cut up rhythms, found noises, distorted synths and bizarre atmospherics"? Too dull. But you get the idea: experimental "post-industrial" music without a great sense of direction, and which never goes quite where you'd expect it. Combining a dreamy sensibility with a psychotic execution, but It Has All Been Done Before. [Available from Tragic Figures, c/o Hugo Moutinho, Apartado 2137, 4202 Porto Codex, PORTUGAL] **BD**

48 Cameras

Third and Last Imitation of Christ (Hypertonia World Enterprises) MC

48 Cameras are a Belgian three-piece, producing an exceptionally professional sound that deserves much wider exposure. Melodic acoustic guitars, carefully poised electric guitars, dramatic keyboards, it's musically as competent as any well-known rock band, if not more so. Only their use of dry narration (mostly in English) rather than singing is likely to hold them back from fame and fortune. For me, it's an uneasy union of cliched rock with more individual tendencies, and the morose, sardonic narration is one of the plus points. A real surprise! [Available from Hypertonia] **BD**

Academy 23 / Lawrence Burton

Europe Awake! (A23) MC C60

Opening with a wonderful a capella *Heilige Tod*, this is a peculiar cassette. Academy 23 are a peculiar group. The music incorporates various amplified acoustic and electronic instruments, voices, radio, effects and the like to provide bizarre atmospheric background to narration, which is in turn both polemical and surreal. Lawrence Burton's contribution to the project is a series of stylish A4 illustrations "as essential to its appreciation as the aural elements", and a series of A23's aggravating, opinionated essays are included too. The music echoes the early industrial groups in its dismal, desolate style, especially some of T.G.'s material. The words are informed by Academy 23's particularly jaundiced view of the world, similar to the points of view in their magazine, *Smile* (see Zine Reviews). I was partly put off by the 80s stylings, and partly intrigued by the content, a lot of which, it has to be said, is provocative bollocks. [Available from BBP, 90 Grange Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire SN3] **BD**

Aisha Kandisha's Jarring Effects

El Buya (Barraka el Farnatshi BARBARITY 002) LP/CD 39 minutes

Heady stuff. The Jarring Effects are a Moroccan band, applying everything from traditional percussion through to electric guitars, and then put through the blender by dub producers in Switzerland. If you want a genre, it's "world beat", but this is remarkably genre-bending music. On one hand you hear hypnotic Arabic delirium, on the other head-scrambling mixing effects. The result is a *trip*. Perhaps too quaint for some, but there's a real vitality to this music, an intoxicated humanity that I found really satisfying. [Available from RecRec, Postfach 717, CH-8026 Zurich, SWITZERLAND; distributed in UK by Sterns, 1-8 Whitfield Place, London W1P 5RW] **BD**

Aisha Kandisha's bizarre headtrip is this page's top recommendation!

Amor Fati

Breasthead (Flesh Records) MC

This cassette sees Amor Fati in songwriting mood. Occasionally it shows a love of deep guitar sounds and powerful drumbeats, with singing and found voices thrown in too. Mostly though, it doesn't click. The failures are of course the more conventional efforts, shot through with echoes of mainstream or indie rock. Nothing wrong with that, there's just enough of it about already. Hell, there's even one track here that sounds just like U2! Since it begs for comparison, I'll admit to preferring U2. [Available from Flesh Records, P.O. Box 5682, Trenton, NJ 08638, USA] **BD**

Las Animas / Bovoso

Sonidos Obscuros (Dark Side D.S.10) MC

Mexican musician Las Animas' side of this split cassette, *Sub-Sex* is a fairly

normal piece of collage music, if any of this sort of thing is ever "normal". Lots of suggestive panting and moaning (porn samples?) mixed with slightly disturbing synths and electronic rhythms, creating a muddy, eerie musical Soho where everyone is perpetually aroused, always coming. Bovoso on the other hand come from France, and incorporate Eric Lacasa of the La Legende des Voix label. Their piece, *Babil*, is an extended musical exploration, with ethnic percussion, disembodied vocals, electronic atmospherics and more. Quite enjoyable. It's nice to see a cassette like this from outside Europe or the English-speaking countries too. [Available from Dark Side, A.P. 21-460, C.P. 04000, Mex.D.F., Mexico] **BD**

Another Headache

Nothing Definate (SPH SPH026) MC

Another Headache have moved upwards in my estimation since their joint 7" with dROME. These noisy soundscapes show unusual restraint, matching the spinning swathes of cacophonous noise against lengths of subdued ambience. The rhythmic buzzing electric sounds of the *Cacophony Concerto*'s 3rd movement are repetitive but almost a sign of incipient minimalism. Industrial minimalism - wouldn't that be great? If you want a genre, then post-industrial. Fairly straightforward by that genre's wide standards: atmospheric instrumental electronic and noise music, but Another Headache are now definitely one name to keep an eye on. [Contact SPH, Apartado 223, 2780 Oeiras, Portugal; or it's £4 inc p&p from Work in Progress, 210 Pitshanger Lane, Ealing, London W5 1QG) **BD**

The Aphex Twin

Analogue Bubble Bath EP (Mighty Force MF 201) 12"

Digeridoo EP (R&S R&S 9201) 12"

The glorious future of techno in two easy lessons. Richard James records all his music in his bedroom, but unlike so many DIY techno-dance DJ/creators he draws his influences from way beyond the increasingly cliched 'breakfast plus nasty sample' crowd. *Analogue Bubble Bath* is a reissue of his first EP from last year, credited to AFX. It shows a twin debt to the new acid / techno experiments of Joey Beltram and the +8 Records maniacs, and to industrial production techniques, most especially on the violently brutal *En-trance to Exit* which sounds like a coach-crash between Meat Beat Manifesto and the London Philharmonic. The new EP, almost certainly to be reissued in the UK via Outer Rhythm shortly, is another step on from the first. The title track, especially, takes the sound of techno into a totally unique direction, layering waves of fluttering digeridoo over electronic pulses, all storming along at a too-fast-but-perfect 150+ bpm. The other tracks are harder and more acidic, but so abstract as to almost challenge you to have the nerve to try to dance to them. Magnificent! **MX**

Armageddon Dildos

Resist (Zoth Ommog ZOT 19) 12"/CD

Resist (popular title that) is a vast improvement on their last single release. This should be a massive club hit. Featuring three mixes, plus a remix of *Frontline of Violence*. *Resist Hard Mix* is thunderously fine hardbeat, reminiscent of Front 242's *Masterhit*, yet more accessible. Again the lyrics are pretty banal, but the rhythms are so catchy that this weakness can be overlooked. A definite DJ purchase. **MR**

Dwight Ashley / Tim Story

A Desperate Serenity (Multimood MRC 012) CD 50 minutes

That's an excellent title, as it describes the mood of these tundra-coated soundscapes perfectly. I'd love to avoid pinpointing Brian Eno as an influence, but it's difficult. *A Desperate Serenity* shows all the same interest in apprehensive ambience that Eno did, as well as sharing a liking for somnambulant tone colour, the spectral timbres that make the sound so much more than just a series of pitches and harmonies. Ashley and Story's compositions are simply a modern realisation of Eno's ideas. They're not at all original. They are, however, quite beautiful. There's a density, a lushness to the sound that Eno never had, and as a result these are lakes of sound just waiting for you to dive into them. Handsome stuff. [Multimood Records, Kungsportsavenyn 27, S-411 36 Göteborg, Sweden] **BD**

Attrition

A Tricky Business (Contempo Records CONTE 175) LP/CD

Attrition is one of those bands who've been around ever since I can remember, but whose records I've never taken the opportunity to purchase. Recently signed to Contempo, their latest release is a pleasant surprise. Attrition's new sound is far from restrained. All manner of instrumentation is evident, male and female voices intertwine among classical and medieval textures. This is refreshing, an uplifting, sentimental and beautiful album. *A Tricky Business* has a classically minimal feeling that is the result of a successful fusion of high-tech ambience and strong personal song-writing. **MR**

Beequeen

Nouen (Korm Plastics KP 4091) 7" flexi

A genuine 'artefact', although only in the sense that it's a fairly useless piece of crap that's intended to be a souvenir of a fairly useless performance. Several very short extracts from a 45-minute live soundtrack to a dream-machine installation, playing at 78rpm and generally either humming in vaguely ambient fashion or going plinkety-plink in vaguely irritating fashion. Not at all interesting. [Korm Plastics, c/o Frans de Waard, Opaalstraat 19, 6534 XK Nijmegen, The Netherlands] **MG**

Belt

S/He (Belt) MC

Belt should have a CD on the way from Silent Records, and if it's as impressive as this cassette then it should be worth hearing. There's everything here from heavy percussion to pretty melodic guitar, with a variety of abstract vocal backdrops, growling, whispering echoing throughout. Everything fits together very well and a range of moods is clearly conveyed. *Sift* in particular, with its ominous ambient droning and hissing, is extremely effective. So how come Belt isn't better known? Believe me, he will be. [Dist by Artware, Odd Size, Silent Records; Contact Belt, c/o Joel Bender, 1907 Kenwood Apt.C, Austin, TX 78704, USA] **BD**

Black Rose

The Room Inside (Contempo Records CONTE 168) LP/CD

The Room Inside consists of the most sombre, forlorn and emotive music that I've heard in a long while. Simple piano arrangements, strings and synthesiser effects act as support for Mara Bressi's vocals, which are often so long-drawn out that words become unrecognisable; her voice becoming one with the ever-present ethereal background melodies. The songs are Bressi's autobiographical reminiscences and remind me of Kate Bush at her most poignant. Bressi must have led a rather fraught life so far. The album features a cover version of Cindytalk's *Touched / Circle of Shit* with Gordon Sharpe on vocals, and in the original Black Rose / Cindytalk composition *Moonlove*. Most definitely music to cry to: don't listen to this if you're undergoing emotional crises ... then again, some people enjoy immersing themselves in such despondency. A memorable release. **MR**

Blue Eyed Christ

Leaders + Followers (KK Records KK 076) LP/CD 40 minutes

A promising debut from John Norten who originates from Chicago (where else?) Very definitely a first release: this shows its naivety through its somewhat straightforward structures. However, the tracks *Angels* and *Addictive* successfully mirror Ministry's *Twitch* album. Which can't be bad. *Leaders + Followers* probably isn't hard enough for devout fans of stomp, but remembering the increasing diversity of today's "scene" this is a perfectly agreeable outing. **MR**

Glenn Branca

Symphony No. 1 (Tonal Plexus) (Danceteria DANCD 081) CD/LP 54 minutes

Previously only available on a ropy ROIR cassette from the US, this reissue of the 1981 guitar orchestra classic is more than welcome. Branca's noiseworks have become more widely available in recent years with the releases of *Symphony No. 4 - Gloria* (Crepuscule) and *No. 6 - Devil Choirs at the Gates of Heaven* (Blast First) but here is where the rock stylings of earlier works like *Lesson No. 1* and *The Ascension* were first transformed into a fully realised opus. Check out especially the first of the four movements, which consists of nothing but various E chords carefully thrashed to death by Branca's sixteen-piece ensemble; a magnificent destructuring of everything rock'n'roll stands for. It's an ensemble, incidentally, that includes Lee Ranaldo and Thurston Moore, later to use Branca's techniques wholesale with Sonic Youth. **MG** ((*Symphony No. 2 - The Peak of the Sacred* is also due for reissue by American label Atavistic - **BD**))

Drem Bruinsma

Six Reels of Joy (Materiali Sonori MASO CD 90023) CD 61 minutes

Bruinsma's album features as collaborators Tuxedomoon's Steven Brown and Blaine Reininger, amongst several others. What results is a sort of crossbred "chamber world music", combining African percussion with European sax and keyboards. There's everything in here from almost poppy songs, through classical organ to avant-jazz, and none of it feels out of place. It's a sophisticated, romantic journey round the world, intertwining all its elements quite cleverly. It's at the same time identifiably individual and broad-minded in what it encompasses. [In case of difficulty contact Materiali Sonori, 52027, San Giovanni Valdarno, Italy] **BD**

Cabaret Voltaire

1974-76 (Mute / Grey Area CABS 15) CD 58 minutes

Stephen Mallinder

Pow Wow Plus (Mute / Grey Area MAL 1) CD 42 minutes

Richard H. Kirk

Disposable Half-Truths (Mute / Grey Area KIRK 1) CD 63 minutes

Let's be fair. Cabaret Voltaire, whatever they may be nowadays, were once one of the more innovative and influential participants in the "industrial music" scene. So it's good to see early classics like *Voice of America* or *Three Mantras* available again. *1974-76*, on the other hand, originally released by Industrial Records, is a different kettle of fish, despite a great Phil Barnes cover. Musically appalling, it's one for Cabs obsessives only, although it does give some idea of the claustrophobic feel they would adopt in later recordings.

Stephen Mallinder's *Pow Wow Plus* is a much better album, Mal focusing on the Cabs' rhythm boxes to produce some taut, nervous music that really gets your tendons twitching. Some of it echoes Eno & Byrne's *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts* (released two years previously in 1980), although stained with a lot more pessimism. The elaborate, plastic beats display the wired, skeletal side of the Cabaret Voltaire sound, while *Disposable Half-Truths* shows off Richard Kirk's darker, more acrid sounds. A lot less musical, mainly because it's from an earlier period (1978), and consequently it's less satisfying. Fans might want to pick it up, as its atmospheres have a particularly bleak taint, but others might want to wait for the reissue of the superior *Time High Fiction*, released in 1983. **BD**

Cabbage Head

Beware of the Artrap (Audiofile Tapes aT 132) MC C60

This isn't at all what I expected. I won't tell you what I expected. The first side, *Tightening the Skin on my Forehead* is a noisy montage / cut-up using various tape machines and a Casio home sampler. The rhythms incorporated into it ensure it doesn't wander completely aimlessly, instead functioning as a continuum of appropriated sound, like an experimental Orb. There are some similarities to the Tape-Beatles, although Cabbage Head are more concerned with sounds and music than with the media. On the other side, *Elvis is Dead* puts guitars and synths to work to create a good long piece of mantra-rock, incorporating Elvis-related samples. There's also an ambient piece, *Tibetan Area*, which is very enjoyable, and on my copy a bonus track, the excellent pulsating *Whalesong*. A good tape, and Cabbage Head are definitely a name to check out. [Available from Audiofile Tapes; or D&C Sight and Sound, 31 Portland St., Leamington Spa CV32 5EY] **BD**

John Cale

Paris S'Eveille (Delabel CDDLB3/MCDLB3) MC/CD 59 minutes

No doubt some people will only buy this for the previously unheard live Velvet Underground track it contains. Why that track's here I've no idea, unless Virgin think it's the only way they'll sell this album ... *Paris S'Eveille* itself is an unexciting slice of soundtrack ambience; the electronic orchestra of the occasionally Nyman-esque *Sanctus* presumably came cheaper than a real one, in which case it's a pity the money saved couldn't somehow have been directed towards developing the music. The other instrumental tracks have a horrible sub-Jan Hammer flavour and only the song *Antarctica Starts Here* is at all worthwhile. On other evidence, Cale is a talented guy, but this is just an album of bad soundtrack music, with nothing particularly inspiring to recommend it. **BD**

Church of Extacy

Church of Extacy / remix (Rising High COE 1/1X) 12"s

GTO

Salvation / remix (React REACT 12004/4R) 12"s

Four more dance-mutilation releases from those groovy hardbeaters, Greater Than One. Especially recommended to you horrible lot are the various Church of Extacy pieces, which thrash violently around distorted acid squiggles and crunching industrial noise, pinned down every so often by a sampled voice not a million miles away from a certain Mr Trent Reznor. *Salvation* is a lesser work, revealing a continuing interest in bleeps, but still something of a dance-floor killer. More more more! **MX**

Phil Clarke

Real Time Demo 2 MC

Despite the lasercopied colour cover, now a badge of commitment amongst cassette artists, I'm going to remain unimpressed. Moderately competent synthpop with a heavy debt to Depeche Mode and a few hardbeat artists, and with some well hidden hints of New Order

too. Almost professional, which just makes the "almost" show up all the more clearly. I really quite like it, but it doesn't grab me in the way, say, Recoil does. If bright black electropop is what you like then this is I suppose as good as any other, but it's an overpopulated field already, and it doesn't stand out enough. [Available from 92 Edward St., Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5RE, UK] **BD**

ClockDVA

Man Amplified (Contempo CONTEDISC 182) LP/CD 55 minutes

ClockDVA continue in the vein of their previous album *Buried Dreams* with an incongruous combination of serious texts regarding the issues raised by new technology, and of sinister techno which is never going to be able to match up to it. The music has advanced little since *Buried Dreams*, possessing the same mesmeric, dissociated synthesis of pulsating electronics and a wonderfully plastic, disinfected atmosphere. This is to its credit: as commercial techno it's non pareil, and you should certainly buy it. But for a band of confirmed neophiles, it's nothing new. **BD**

Cultes des Ghouls

Rituale Romanum (Struktur 001) MC

The five tracks on this cassette were apparently recorded in an ancient stone circle somewhere in Germany. It's appropriately spooky stuff, especially played at an unnecessarily intense volume. Maybe you ought to find your own stone circle somewhere at night to **really** recreate the proper atmosphere. The music? Lots of metalbanging, both spartan and, as on the particularly enjoyable *Nihil Novi Sub Sole*, rhythmic and unsettling. Plus a few horns, noise generators, distorted vox, echoing thuds. Perhaps some similarities with early Lustmørd. At times it's a bit sloppy, but I found this made it only more human and more emotive. [Available from Strukturen für Irrtum und Erkenntnis, c/o S. Dierks, Goethestr. 2, D-6100 Darmstadt, Germany] **BD**

Dance 2 Trance

Where is Dag? / Deepest Vision (Suck Me Plasma!) 12"/CD

Dance 2 Trance are one of Germany's most popular techno acts at the moment. I must admit that past releases have proved a little disappointing, but *Where is Dag?* is a flowing bass beast at its most virile, complete with sampled crow of a cockerel as made famous by The Orb. *Deepest Vision* is a Lil-Louis copy, minus the sexual excitement, leaving the track in a vacant state. Saved by the A-side. Dance 2 Trance unravel spherical levels of hypnotism. **MR**

Delerium

Euphoric (Third Mind TM92622) 12"/CD

A change of style sees Delerium mount an attack on club culture with the first two tracks (and only two on the 12"). There are no lyrics on either of these songs, but plenty of samples from B-movies ensure that the repetition does not meander pointlessly. *Grave Mentor* and *Sorrow* are CD only tracks, totalling twenty minutes worth of Delerium's trademark uneasy atmospheric ambiences. There's nothing really new here, as through their alter-egos they've explored the club-oriented material elsewhere. There is a noticeably "gothique" hue to Delerium that makes each release worthwhile though. **MR**

Delerium

Spiritual Archives (Dossier DCD 9033) CD 61 minutes

Presumably Delerium's final Dossier release before moving to Third Mind, and apparently a compilation of otherwise unreleased material. It includes some of their most adventurous and best music. The superb opening track, *Drama*, combines the heavy percussive punch and gothic hue of previous albums with garbled noise previously alien to these precision-fetishists. *Rise Above* is an astonishing, awe-inspiring soundtrack. *Aftermath* is a potent amalgam of subdued ambience with electronic rhythms based around samples of Depeche Mode, of all people. Sampling is an important part of the Delerium sound, perhaps often unrecognised because it's well integrated rather than peppered all over the place. That's only the first three tracks, and this is Delerium's best release yet. **BD**

Digital Poodle

Soul Crush (DOVentertainment Dove 88) LP/CD

Some bands seem established after a single release. Often due to hype, hopefully because of a quality debut outing. Canada's Digital Poodle fall into the latter set. *Soul Crush* is a shit-kickin' beat storm. Mouth 392's screeches compliment the Warzau-like percussion. Each track is minimal in nature, there is no over-elaboration, each beat, each blow is relevant. Highlights are *Soul Crush*, the single which has been remixed by Zoviet France; *Nasty* and *Repeal the Deal* strip the nerves, you're a loaded follower of bass. Turn on the Power! Feelings of Gush! ((What?! **BD**)) [Contact DOVentertainment, 2 Bloor Street West, Suite 100-159, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4W 3E2] **MR**

Dive

Final Report (Minus Habens MHR 010) MLP/MCD

Yes! Yes! Absolutely phenomenal! Dirk Ivens is Dive, formerly one half of Klinik. Whereas his former partner practices restraint in his music, Ivens has opted for utter sonic bedlam. *Final Report* is Dive's second release. The eponymous first album was released on Body Records, an Antler-Subway subsidiary. That, for me, was the most remarkable release of 1991, the record that had the most revelatory effect upon hearing.

Because I knew what to expect, this release simply enhances my pleasure. For new listeners this should prove to be one of the most **original** musical experiences for quite a while. Ivens works slabs of industrial feedback / dirge / mechanical operations into percussive pressures that pummel the ear. Three throbs of this repeated to the point of distortion, overladen with a strangled voice or found speech, and sometimes a mean bassline as in the track *Final Report*, Dive's pieces crash the frequencies. *Mercy* is a sombre organ discourse, Iven's vocals echo, louder than drums. Never have words been so vehemently splintered. Perfect. Sweet textural abrasive mutation on all levels. [Available through Contempo distribution; or contact Minus Habens] **MR**

Doc Wör Mirran

Save the Fish (Musical Tragedies MT-109) LP

Deformed Presidents Protect Each Other (Musical Tragedies MT-144) 7"

Save the Fish is Doc Wör Mirran's first LP, released after several others and apparently more song-oriented than their usual material. The title track is whimsical indie-techno-pop-rock, of a sort that might be beloved of Cordelia Records bands like Ruth's Refrigerator. Other tracks explore waves of furry industrial noise combined with heavily processed abstract vocals. It's good humoured and very personalised noise, with songs, basically, a mixed bag with a few really enjoyable stretches. The single, *Deformed Presidents*, mixes rhythmic industrial noise with a narration about schizophrenia, other dulled vocals, and searing fuzzy guitar. Only the second side, *Estrogen Replacement Therapy* is at all interesting (mainly thanks to that guitar sound), although with its 16-page booklet of graphics, photos and writing, it is a very nice package. [Available from Musical Tragedies, Muggenhoferstr. 39,

8500 Nurnberg, Germany; single is also available from Tragedy for Dee Too, P.O. Box 12034, Seattle, WA 98102, USA] **BD**

Roger Doyle

Oizzo No (Dom Bartwuchs DOM BW 03 / Artware 05 CD) CD 68 minutes

Charlotte Corday / Thalia (Dom Bartwuchs DOM BW 04 / Artware 06 CD) CD 54 minutes

I've only heard of Roger Doyle thanks to his music under the name Operating Theatre, so I had little idea what to expect from these two CDs. *Oizzo No* is a reissue of an LP compiling material from 1968 to 1975, along with some material from a 1978 album, *Thalia*. Some of it is pleasant but inconsequential, like the three piano compositions. The other works for acoustic instruments share some conventional influences (Irish folk on *Ceol Sidhe*), but range through increasingly unusual sound worlds, with the melodies cracked apart and the convention thrown out the window. It's certainly a seminal album: the tape pieces prefigure the work of any number of later musicians. I found it mostly unconvincing, and it all has a slightly plaintive quality that I couldn't get into, but it's on the second CD that things really get going.

Charlotte Corday and the Lament of Louis XVI is a composition from 1989, whilst *Thalia* itself dates back originally to 1976. It's pretty far-out electro-acoustic sound collage, a development of ideas explored more briefly on *Oizzo No*. Sounds and voices in unexpected juxtapositions, and distorted in strange ways. It's outlandish enough to make it genuinely uneasy listening, and very imaginative, but as far as the genre's concerned it's all quite respectable, quite traditional. A simple narrative underlies all of *Charlotte Corday*, so it could be viewed simply as an abstract piece of sound theatre. If you're a Nurse With Wound fan, you'll probably go for this in a very big way, especially *Thalia*. [Available from Artware] **BD**

The Drowningbreathing

Schiz (Audiofile Tapes aT 134) MC

Cabaret Voltaire was the first thing to come to mind when I put this in the tape-player, and I don't mean the Zurich one either. Oppressive, dark wailing electronics and buried vocals over febrile rhythms. It's a fair point of comparison. The Drowningbreathing sound like what the Cabs would be doing nowadays if only they hadn't lost their edge. And that's meant as a definite recommendation. They're not clones either: but fans of acidic electro-rhythmic asphyxiation need look no further. [Available from Audiofile Tapes] **BD**

DRP

Electro Brain 586 (Body Records BR7009) LP/CD

Twelve tracks recalling the grand old days when Nitzer Ebb were hard, when Depeche Mode were an integral part of my record collection, and when Japanese electronic body music bands were unheard of, to me at least. DRP's debut on Body Records is quite a surprise. I enjoyed the distorted Japanese-tinged vocals and their harshness. Some of these tracks will test the limit of the listener because the rhythms and synths take back seat to the vocals which are absolutely **screeched** down the microphone. There's a raw freshness to DRP, almost a naive innocence to their exertions. There's a wry sense of humour aborad in tracks like *Washing Your Cock* (very early Front 242), *The Acider* (mutant house dance) and *New Days* (Skinny Puppy screams included). Play this loud and I guarantee it will annoy anybody and everybody! **MR**

The Drum Fondu

The Singer Just Left the House (IRRE-Tapes ITO48) MC C46

Swell (Dromentakel DT K707) MC

The Singer is a little difficult to categorise. It's electronic rock, I guess, with drum machines, synths and samples, producing fairly straightforward instrumental music with hints of everything from hardbeat to soundtrack music. It all sounds a bit cheap and amateurish, but believe me, it's still fairly engaging. Like all these underground tapes, treated simply as product they're usually found wanting: they aim to make up for it in personality, contact and intimacy. There are **people** responsible for this, not stars. *Swell* brings the singer back inside, turning its eight tracks into more obvious rock music, with the same characteristic snappy drum machine. It's better than the IRRE-Tape, slightly more polished, and might appeal to anyone who fancies a more poppy, easier-going hardbeat. [*The Singer* available from IRRE-Tapes; *Swell* available from The Drum Fondu, Provooststraat 35, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium] **BD**

Eden

Gateway to the Mysteries (Third Mind TM 9219-2) CD

Employing modern sampling and programming techniques simultaneously with a wide variety of traditional wind, string and percussive instruments, some dating back to the middle ages, Eden concoct a brew steeped in rich imagery, successfully created their own folklore and mythology. The cover art, "Light Between Worlds" is reminiscent of the 4AD house style, and this music would not be out of place on that label. An Australian five-piece, their compositions such as *Mystes*, *Elder and Earthen Flame*, *Removed From Darkness* and *Searching For Angels Hands* provide textual strength to the images one perceives: a forest glade, glass-blue translucent water, crystallised cobwebs, wraiths, nymphs echoing through the flora and fauna. A pristine recording. **MR**

Electro Assassin

Jamming the Voice of the Universe (Concrete) LP/CD

Electro Assassin are what used to be the nucleus of Johnson Engineering Co., hardbeat purveyors of some esteem. This new incarnation has a noticeably upbeat, fresh approach to its output. *Jamming the Voice of the Universe* is a very cultured "debut" release. Falling within the hardbeat dance genre, the album describes the type of futuristic society envisaged in the films "Hardware", "Blade Runner" and "Robocop". The rhythms on the tracks *Big Violence* and *No Remorse* are pristine processed programs, accompanied by a slightly vocoded voice, alien yet understandable. Perhaps the standout track is *Anit-Pure*, a soft, pulsing, even soulful mantra which contrasts dramatically against its soiled vocal content: "alienation, termination, disintegration ... I want everything corrupt". Electro Assassin are jamming the voice of the universe, and doing it better than most. Surprisingly contemplative in nature. Is this what we are to become: a collection of Destroyed Men? Electro Assassin believe so. **MR**

Evil Moisture

Yerm Flowers (Evil Moisture) MC

OK, now you know as much as I do, except that I can read the track titles and got to have fun with the wacky packaging. Cut up mangled noise, like taking a microphone and throwing it into a metal recycling plant. Play it at the neighbour's kids and watch them run and hide. Easy to review: I've heard far too much just like it and I don't like this one either. [Available from Cheeses International] **BD**

The Ex and Tom Cora

Scrabbling at the Lock (RecRec Music ReCDec 39/EX 051D) CD 51 minutes

Seminal Dutch punk group The Ex team up with seminal avant-cellist Tom Cora

for twelve songs here. They've both been releasing music since the start of the 80s, Cora collaborating with the likes of Fred Frith, Eugene Chadbourne and Bill Laswell. *Scrabbling at the Lock* is rock music of surprising spirit and invention. Socialist-surrealist lyrics sit on top of steadily cycling rhythms, and although it's never anything more than slightly avant-garde rock, it's a pleasant, organic, very attractive example of that musical style. [Available from These Records in UK; or Rec Rec Genossenschaft, Postfach 717, 8026 Zürich, Switzerland] **BD**

Eyehategod

In the Name of Suffering (Intellectual Convulsion SPASM III) LP/CD

Well, you may or may not be able to tell it apart from generic hardcore thrash. I couldn't. I enjoyed it, it's brawny and solid, a dense mass of low-frequency electric guitar. But I can't recommend it: *In the Name of Suffering* is too predictable, too obvious, too conventional to really stir up the emotions the way it might like to. [Distributed through Revolver in UK; or contact Intellectual Convulsion, 51 Bld. A. Blanqui, 75013 Paris, FRANCE] **BD**

Fred Frith

Step Across the Border (RecRec Music ReVCec 30) VHS Video 90 minutes

A "celluloid improvisation" by Nicolas Humbert and Werner Penzel, with music by Frith and a host of the usual RecRec suspects, this hour-and-a-half of monochrome artiness is alternately jarring and lyrical, both poetic and vulgar. But throughout, whether the scenes show the musicians performing or talking, or are just of the people and environment around them, there's an engaging humanity to it all, a damp-but-smiling charm. It's surprisingly unpretentious, and the visual context helps endear Frith's music even to those like me who find it sometimes too self-indulgent and unfocussed. If you're an admirer of Frith then you **certainly** ought to get hold of the video. Anyone else should find that it's a great introduction. The black-and-white photography superficially seems very detached, but somehow the images and music create an intimacy that more than balances this out. This peculiar romanticism is in turn made palatable by the adventurous spirit of Frith's avant-guitar playing. Marvellous, inspiring stuff. Oh yes, watch out for the kid with the bucket! [Available from These Records; or contact RecRec Genossenschaft, Postfach 717, CH-8026 Zurich, SWITZERLAND] **BD**

Diamanda Galás

The Singer (Mute STUMM 103) CD 46 minutes

"You know they're artistically bankrupt when they release the album of cover versions". Well, you try telling that to Diamanda Galás. Her singing is more concerned with the **voice** than the text. When singing the likes of *I Put A Spell On You* (by Screamin' Jay Hawkins) the words matter less than the way she tells 'em. For this album, all we get is Diamanda and her Steinway grand piano (occasionally a Hammond organ). Musically, it's very limited in variety and interest, so it's limited to Diamanda's ability to express her emotion vocally. She's the same caustic, passionate diva as ever, but I still don't think she was able to transcend the musical limitations of these songs. **BD**

God

Possession (Venture CDVE 910) LP/CD 68 minutes

Released on the normally more cerebral Venture Records label, this is the debut studio album from a group who've been around quite some time. The nine members include some known also for their association with the likes of Godflesh, Slab and even Henry Cow. John Zorn guests on three tracks. There's also a digeridoo buried somewhere in the mix although I can't say I spotted it. You get everything you'd expect: an unholy noisefest of supernova jazzcore madness, to be precise. God are all about power, all about the ecstasy of submission, the pleasure of possession. It's not music meant to entertain: it's violent, divine *noise* in which you lose your self, drown in a sea of fiery black bliss. It really hits its stride with a thoroughly overwhelming quarter-hour tantrum called *Love* and the dread-fully atmospheric *Black Jesus*. Desperately impressive. **BD**

Glass Bead Music

I reviewed **Rasputin**'s *Life Love and Liberty Vol.I* in **E S T** #2. Rob Jones is the man behind Rasputin's neo-surrealist music and narrations, and he also runs the label, Glass Bead Music. Formed seven or eight years ago to release the *From the Other Side of the Glass Asylum* LP by **The Chapter House** (no relation to the tedious indie band), the label has recently resurfaced with a variety of cassette releases.

Deaf Man Musick's *Sound Sound Sculptures* (GB012) collects together more of Rob's recordings (some in collaboration with guitarist James Flex: everything from a recording of dada-influenced street theatre through cut-up lyrics on Rasputin lines and collaged music, including an ear-rending rendition of *Love Me Tender*. These last take sampling to a logical extreme: borrowing entire recordings and juxtaposing them, seeing what new feelings arise like the Third Mind from these combinations. It's frequently too arrhythmic or toneless to make it entertaining listening, but it's certainly not afraid to step outside most musical boundaries, and occasionally what results is splendidly unsettling.

Without wanting Glass Bead to look too incestuous, *Terror of the Situation* (GB011), by the now defunct **Fragment**, also features Rob Jones. One side of this is a recording of an improvisation at a "genteel dinner party"; the other selects several pieces, reflecting the group's varied line-ups, from its core of Rob and guitarist Nigel Tyson up to an eleven-piece ensemble. The music varies from brutal rock deconstruction to surreal, tangential atmospheres. Not particularly well recorded, guitars, synths, percussion, vocals, sax all swirl in the pot, and even if the execution sometimes lets it down, the ideas are generally imaginative. Possibly more from Fragment in the pipeline.

Robert Hill used to be one-third of The Chapter House. His tape, *Contemporary / Scenes From the Test Card* (GB003) collects 12 pieces of film soundtrack together, all with an atmospheric, wavery feeling to them. There are definite occasional hints of psychedelic music amidst all the solo guitar and synthesisers, but that's the only easy reference I can spot. The rest is just melancholy, emotive mood music, occasionally showing too much of its ultimate rock roots for my tastes, but generally eminently listenable. There's also a creeping New Age feel to it, but it remains pleasant stuff.

I wouldn't be at all surprised to see more from Rasputin in the future too, as Rob has plenty short stories and narratives that could be given the Rasputin treatment. Wait and see. **BD**

Contact: Glass Bead Music, c/o 1 Amberley Court, Victoria Road, Ramsgate, Kent.

Randy Greif

Alice in Wonderland 2 (Staalplaat) CD 67 minutes

Part two of a limited edition five-part series, which is a pity because it means there will be a lot of people missing some great music. Greif has described himself as a "sound surrealist" and who am I to argue? Beautifully packed in peculiar fold-out card, *Alice in Wonderland* mixes a straightforward narration, drawn from Lewis Carroll's story, with highly atmospheric musical rhythms and odd sounds. It's hard to describe, but believe me, surrealism is no misnomer. The moods created, with their odd cut-ups and juxtapositions are as close to the dream experience as music ever gets. Despondent melodies talk to perturbed harmonies, themes repeat and cycle. There are a few pointers towards the music of the Hafler Trio, but otherwise no parallel for this excellent recording. [Available from Staalplaat, PO Box 11453, 1001 GL Amsterdam, The Netherlands] **BD**

Birgitte Grimstad

After a Visit in the Greenhouse of Dreams (Victoria VCD 19055) CD

Apparently Birgitte Grimstad's eighteenth album, this is only the second I've come across, so don't expect it to be easy to find [this copy from Tower Records in London]. It's well worth searching for though. The 23-minute title track is based on a multi-media project by two Danish artists. The electrical brain activity of a man and woman, as well as animals and radio scanners, are projected onto a computer screen, and interpreted by the performers, who included four singers and three percussionists. The latter are missing here, and all the vocals are by a multi-tracked Ms Grimstad. What results is a superb, exotic journey through a space filled by fragile yet somehow muscular vocal sounds. She uses extended vocal techniques along similar lines to Meredith Monk, shrieking, gasping, trilling notes, speaking garbled words, swirls of pointillistic high-pitched tones and gentle polyphonic humming. The second of three pieces, *Last Bird* is similar if a bit less outlandish, and as a result even more listenable, while the final *Living Windharp* is merely pleasant. For sheer variety, imagination and beauty it far surpasses most albums around. **BD**

The Hafler Trio

Kill the King (Silent Records SR 9113) CD 73 minutes

That's 73 minutes without a break, I'd better point out, not even a single index point. Andrew McKenzie obviously knows how he wants you to listen to *Kill The King*. Recorded with the assistance of, amongst others, John Duncan and Adi Newton, this CD, nicely packaged with a typically confusing little booklet, extends the Hafler Trio sound - ambient collage using both electronics and field recordings - ever further. If you're not in a receptive mood, it's just a very long ambient soundtrack. If you are, this is bewildering, transporting, dream-sound. It worked best for me left playing when I went to bed. Neither fully awake nor fast asleep, it's dazed, disorienting condition coincided with mine perfectly. [Contact Silent Records, 540 Alabama 315, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA] **BD**

Halo

Alloy (Elektrip EL 100) CD 56 minutes / LP

You like that indie rock stuff? With the hovering grungy guitars, like any number of faceless groups? Maybe you'll like this then. This is the only item I've reviewed so far for this issue that I've succumbed to the urge to fast forward through most of. It's honestly not that bad, for what it is. There's even a very attractive experimental tinge to a couple of the tracks: *5:38* (one of two extra CD tracks) and *Regen* in particular are quite excellent, developing different types of mantric guitar energy away from the song format that blights everything else. [Distributed by Revolver in UK] **BD**

Hybryds

The Ritual Should be Kept Alive (3rio Art 005) CD 21 minutes

You wouldn't guess from the title, but this is music firmly in the ritualistic genre. Sound sources are limited to human voice, electronic drums, and African woodblock percussion, although at times it's hard to believe no synthesis or sampling is involved. The whole CD is one long composition, opening with ambient sounds and vocal drones, becoming gradually more forceful. Percussion is introduced and propels things onwards to a potent conclusion. It creates a very magickal aura and should appeal to a **lot** of people. [Available from 3rio Art] **BD**

Hybryds & Alpha Project

Octahedron (3rio Art) 7" 33rpm

Yet more music intended to "trigger ancient hidden information in your mind". Well, it didn't do that for me, but maybe that just says something about my mind. The music? More rhythmic, ritualistic post-industrial stuff. The cyclic rhythms are regular but slightly elusive, and all the other sound material layered on top is very atmospheric and inviting. It's very carefully put together, as is the sleeve, up to 3rio Art's usual high standard. Side two is silent, so particularly helpful for allowing your subconscious images to flow without any distraction. [Available from 3rio Art] **BD**

Illyana Rasputin

In Pittsburgh (Runciter Corporation RUN12T2ILL001) MC

I'd like to be kind, but I can't get into this at all. The synths are off-key, the voices out of tune, the sound weak and thin, the vocals remind me occasionally of Genesis P.O.'s off-key moaning, and it all feels like a throwback to the early 80s. It smells of chlorine. It certainly rejects convention, but it equally certainly doesn't subvert it. There are a few moments where all this produces something fascinatingly depressive, but sadly they're in the minority. [Available from Runciter Corporation; or Audiofile Tapes in USA] **BD**

Intermix

Intermix (Third Mind TM 9230-2) CD

Dream On / Funky Hell (Third Mind TM 2411-6) 12"

This latest side-project from Frontline Assembly is initially a shock. They're using cliched rhythms and trademarks from commercial music! Oh ma gawd! But, think again ... Such rhythms might seem cliched to those who use them, but FLA haven't to date employed such techniques, which goes to show how original their past works have been. Hence the well-worked dance beats of *Anguish* and *Dead Ladder* are a welcome alternative to the electro-thrash. *Requiem Dub* takes a Renegade Soundwave bassline and combines it with Delerium's gothic chants given a new age tinge. Meanwhile, Intermix haven't forgotten their roots. *S+M=Y* and *Cum & Get It* are seriously hardhouse workouts similar to ClockDVA's latest, and some of the more hyper Cyberactif material. Clubland friendly and sampler-heavy Intermix should hopefully signal the crossover that's been threatening for some time. **MR**

In the Nursery

Sense (Third Mind TM 9271) LP/CD

It's no real surprise that the Humberstons' music goes down better on the continent than on this island. This album constantly evokes images of France or Germany, grand and romantic landscapes. It's too lofty for cynical British tastes, I suppose. From the opening *Blue Religion* where exhilarating drums drag

Birgitte Grimstad and the Hybryds win E S T's award for *Artists Most Deserving of Wider Recognition.*

the epic synths and woodwinds bodily forwards, through several tracks full of expressive French vocals from Dolores Marguerite, to the hushed ambience of *Sinistral*, the vision is kept up throughout. If it does have one fault, it's all a bit too artificial, too synthetic at times. It took me a few listens to appreciate the music behind the gloss. The most synthetic track, *Syntonic*, matching stringy washes of sound to electronic sequencers, is also one of the most surprising, with a huge blast of sound heralding its finale. If you really loathe romantic, soundtrack-style music, you'll never get on well with an album like this, but there's perhaps enough majestic emotion here to win over even the more cynical listener. **BD**

Jouissance

The Satyr (Minus Habens MHR009) 12" 13 minutes

Jouissance, the pseudonym of Britain's Michael Sefton, is gradually making a name for himself via places as diverse as Earthly Delight's experimental music sampler *A Joyful Noise* and this new single for Italian label Minus Habens. Part of what looks like a newfound enthusiasm for dance in the label, *The Satyr* is three tracks of intricately sequenced electronic pulsation, midway between techno dance and F242-style hardbeat. Maybe a more energetic version of ClockDVA? Not a classic, but still extremely competent and enjoyable stuff. Watch this space! [Available from Minus Habens or distributed via Contempo] **BD**

Edward Ka-Spel

Tanith & The Lion Tree (Third Mind TM 9267-2) LP/CD

It's becoming increasingly difficult to describe this man's work. This is due to the eccentricity of the sounds contained within. For those familiar with Ka-Spel's vocalisations, there's more of the same here. However the adult ballads and nursery rhymes are this time coupled with a dark, malignant backdrop which should appeal to many "industrialists". Ka-Spel's voice is at the fore in the majority of these pieces, narrating like some anonymous deity from the Land of Oz. At once reed-thin, dry, then a processed monster, Ka-Spel's trademark is his strange lyrical content. Given the environment on this particular release, Ka-Spel's visions come squirming into reality. Truly bizarre. **MR**

Keeler

Playing Field (Great Orm Productions GOP CD3) CD 48 minutes

This is Keeler's third CD, and like previous work it continues to explore instrumental synthesiser music. But it's hardly "new age", thankfully. It varies from the peculiar abstractions of *Dreamstate* to the murky ambience of *And The Clouds Held Back Their Tears*, using electronic sounds of fairly individual character. Generally, it's a vibrant and colourful music, mixing solid but bizarre sounds with rumbling drones, tinkling chimes and sonorous rhythms. At times, it feels slightly artificial, but mostly it's sufficiently unique to differentiate it from all the other synth artists out there. As a result, electronic music fans should check Keeler out. [Available from Great Orm Productions, 496-A Hudson Street, Suite D-35, New York, NY 10014, USA] **BD**

Laetherstrip

Object V (Zoth Ommog ZOT 18) 12"/CD

This latest release from Claus Larsen, Zoth Ommog's own electronics guru, in true Al Jourgensen fashion, is his most cultured to date. *Antius* is an intricate industrial / techno melding including many samples concerning the JFK assassination. *Nosecandy* is extreme electro-thrash, but unlike Frontline Assembly, Larsen does not manage to convince the listener of his anger. *Mohawk* is a statement supporting the plight of the true natives of America. The track is a plodding tribute to the Indian - plodding in the sense of slow rhythmic tribal drumming. The final track *Black Gold* is a competent Ministryesque electronic aural assault. You could do worse ... **MR**

Laibach

Kapital (Mute STUMM 82) 2LP/CD 79 minutes

Surely one of the year's most eagerly awaited albums, a mammoth masterwork by the jackbooted Slovenians, produced at a time when their homeland has gained independence, amidst violent confrontation that still continues in neighbouring Bosnia. Laibach continue their quest to conquer the music of the West, producing a techno / hardbeat album that takes command not through sheer power, not by pitting force against force, but by creating a void in the heart of their victim. It's a disembowelled techno, a music without flesh, a stainless steel skeleton of electronics around an empty dub core. It's not very danceable, and retains an alien feeling that ensures its originality. *Decade Null* opens things with dramatic percussion and the sounds of preparation for war. It's an intense, ominous beginning, perhaps one of the best things Laibach have ever done. There are hints throughout that Laibach have turned their gaze on the economic upheavals in Eastern Europe, or on the psychological upheavals common to all the individuals going through this unpredictable period of history, but there's no real message here: nothing to latch onto. My first reaction to it was disappointment: there's little to it conceptually. Musically, however, it's Laibach's greatest victory so far. **BD**

The Land of Guilt and Blarney

The Land of Guilt and Blarney (Audiofile Tapes aT 150) MC

Consisting of Audiofile Big Cheese himself, Carl Howard, and various combinations of Reginald Taylor, Louis Boone and Renard Hines, this is a good example of Audiofile's brand of bizarreness. Off-the-wall drum machines, synthesised noise-squiggles, effects, weird vocal narration. It feels arbitrary enough to put me off, but for anyone who fancies a blend somewhere between The Residents and the Cabs, this is that, or at least as close as it gets. Oddly enough, there's an avant-jazz feel to it, despite all the space sounds and electronics, and its spartan nature also reminds me of musique concrete at times, like on *My Dinner With the Amperes*. Difficult to categorise. [Available from Audiofile Tapes] **BD**

The Loop Orchestra

Suspense (Endless Recordings ER 002) LP 43 minutes

Well, the name gives it away. The title track occupies 21 minutes and one side of this record, and it's well loopy. Circling, cycling, turning, rotating, twisting, wheeling, swirling fragments of taped acoustic sound sources. Some recognisable, such as occasional voices, most not. The technique is very simple but the result surprisingly persuasive. The repetitive textures prove quite mesmeric, but they're certainly not bland or easy listening. I'll admit to a bias in favour of this kind of music (a point of reference is Bruce Gilbert) but it's a very enjoyable record. [Available from These Records; or contact Endless Recordings, P.O. Box 693, Newtown, N.S.W. 2042, Australia] **BD**

Lycia

Ionia (Projekt PRO 32) CD 59 minutes

Awful Goth nonsense from a label that normally has a far higher quality control threshold. With its inept drum machine lines, rumbling bass and fluttering guitar figures, and ponderous, doom-threatening vocals, I would suggest that it is actually all evidence of a fascinating scientific discovery: a lost world where music hasn't progressed beyond 1982! Even the introduction of sampling and tapes on the lifetime-long *Monsoon I & II*

can't disguise the bankrupt nature of this music. Stick to Black Tape For A Blue Girl. [Available from Projekt, PO Box 1591, Garden Grove, CA 92642, USA] **MG**

Machines of Loving Grace

Rites of Shiva (Mammoth MR 0026) 12"/CD

Haven't heard the LP yet, but if this single is anything to go by it will be big on the industrial dancefloors in '92, surely the year when the metal / industrial collision will cross over to mainstream (pop chart) acceptance in a big way. Machines of Loving Grace sound like Nine Inch Nails jamming with the Red Hot Chili Peppers, with Captain Beefheart's illegitimate son growling out vocals. Nice sample of Kate Bush laughing too. Way too 'rock' for the **E S T** editor and his weird pals, but not at all unpleasant. **MG**

Magic Moments at Twilight Time

Flashbax Vol.3 (IRRE-Tapes ITO67) MC C46

OK, Hawkwind fans, look up! Yeah, it's all here: mantric rhythms, "radiophonic workshop" space sounds, squawking keyboards and trippy guitars. Plus a few cut-ins of M.M.T.T. taking the piss over the top, talking about "joints" and quaint old things like that. Even the odd hint of Blondie in there. I'd feel like I'd fallen through a time-warp if I didn't know so many people are still exactly like this ... Anyway, if you're a spacerock fan, this is definitely enjoyable stuff. If you hate Hawkwind, you'll loathe this. If you're somewhere in between, tune in, toke up, try it ... even a confirmed cynic like myself quite enjoyed it. [Available from IRRE-Tapes] **BD**

Main

Calm (Situation Two SIT 89 T) 12"

For a band so beloved of the indie music press (formed out of half of the band Loop), this is astonishingly good music. *There Is Only Light* buries the sluggish lyric under waves of corrugated guitar noise, while *Remain* is a torpid mixture of unearthly e-guitar frequencies, pale and murmuring. *Feed the Collapse* is controlled vibrating and buzzing and *Sever*'s atmospherics have more in common with the likes of Asmus Tietchens and Nurse With Wound than with the indie scene. A marvel, and soon to be coupled with the 12" *Hydra* as a CD album, *Hydracalm*. Look out for it. **BD**

Casper Brötzmann Massaker

Der Abend Der Schwarzen Folklore (Our Choice / Rough Trade Germany RTD 195.1248.2) LP/CD 40 minutes

Something like a collision between Einstürzende Neubauten and Glenn Branca, Caspar Brötzmann's Massaker declare war both with and against the electric guitar. Like another guitar / drums trio, Fat, Caspar Brötzmann is not interested in anything as juvenile as a "song". Instead, the four tracks on this album examine guitarnoise as texture: specifically, guitarnoise as aural sandpaper. Thus you get the wailing wall-of-noise harmonies, quiet echoes of electrical storms, and taut, abrasive rhythms. It's a lot more restrained than I'm told earlier Massaker releases were. The raw, paranoid taste of the electric guitars is carefully controlled - you can hear for yourself what they'd be like if they really let loose, so they simply don't need to. The only real faults are occasional throwbacks to conventional rock, especially some of the drumming, but don't let that put you off. **BD**

Minister of Noise

Voodoo Soul (KK Records KK 070) LP/CD 52 minutes

Mad Bastard! Only Sir Freddie Viadukt could give percussion such a blighted personality. KK have certainly signed up a character, much of which transpires via Sir Freddie's demonic, childlike enthusiasm for the clogged, dogged groove. *In Our Life*, *Footfooler* and *Midas Mud* beat back the sceptics with cynicism itself. *Voodoo Soul*'s drum patterns are the blood that gushes within the mind of the deranged ... Would you like to see some puppies little girl? ... The thrill of the forbidden. **MR**

Steve Moore

The Threshold of Liberty (Inner Ear) MC

These recordings from the early eighties are experiments in musical surrealism, the juxtaposition of seemingly incompatible musical and noise elements to produce something altogether unexpected. There are recordings of classical music, monks chanting, highly processed vocals, environmental sounds, and what appear to be electronic sounds mixed together in here. The elements are carefully woven in: the combinations don't jar but do manage to create something new from their constituent parts. It's an entrancing, imaginative tape, evidence of considerable talent, and really quite indispensable if you're interested in experimental music. [Available from Inner Ear Recordings, 21B Shanter Road, Maidens, Ayrshire, U.K.] **BD**

Nagamatzu

Igniting the Corpse (Motorcade CADE 4C) MC

Comparable to Severed Heads' *City Slab Horror / Since the Accident* albums, Nagamatzu, named after a Japanese comic-book character, are onto something special. The superb cover art and title suggest doom-laden atmospheric vibes. Not so. Much thought has obviously been invested in this product. *Quietus* makes me want to weep through suppressed joy - it's that effective. *Malaria* is a tribute to the dark minds inhabiting this world. *Firewalker* does what it says. The emotion conveyed by Nagamatzu surprised me, and is what makes *Igniting the Corpse* such a memorable experience, and consequently such a definite purchase. [Available from Motorcade, address below] **MR**

Nagamatzu

Space Shuttle Shuffle (Motorcade CADE 1T) 12"

There are two sides to the band's first piece of vinyl: neither is a great indication of the style Nagamatzu adopted on the *Igniting the Corpse* cassette, although the samples and synths do hint at some of what was to come. *Lift Off* is up-tempo voxless synth-pop, as is *Schlaggefahr*, but *The Sunlight Home* is a fairly unimaginative piece instrumental indie-rock. Not the best introduction to the band, but perfectly OK in its own way. [Available from Motorcade, 20 Wilmer House, Daling Way, London, E3 5NW] **BD**

Nightmare Lodge

Asylum (Minus Habens) MC

Unless you've heard Nightmare Lodge before, you'll get quite a surprise shortly into the opening *Crushed Symphony*. I won't say what it is. Nightmare Lodge have the perfect name to suit their sound: this particular blend of corruption is not the sort of thing you want to leave playing as you drift into r.e.m. sleep. It's the sound of the restless dreamscape, the sleeper tossing and turning as strange and distinctly unfriendly presences invades her unconscious mind. In more down-to-earth terms, it's a dark, surreal, atmospheric noise-music intended to be the exact opposite of easy listening. Black drones, swirling rhythms, fragmented voices and unholy growls. Buy this, but keep the lights turned **on**! [Minus Habens Records, via Giustino Fortunato 8/N, 70125 Bari, Italy] **BD**

No contest sez **E S T** ed: *Der Abend Der Schwarzen Folkloren* wins hands down.

Njurmännen

Negativland / Letzte Tage Letzte Nächte (Studio Urania SUS005) 7"

An up-tempo blend of techno-pop with more experimental sequences, dissonant guitars and clanking followed by a superfast electro-chase. Njurmännen ("The Kidney-Men") try out something a bit different on the second side, a mournful ballad mixed with hints of post-industrial atmosphere. A combination of a bad pressing and lots of unfriendly scratches on the vinyl combined forces to spoil things however. So if it sounds interesting, ask Studio Urania to check your copy before sending it off! [Available from Studio Urania, Södra Allegatan 3, S-41301 Göteborg, SWEDEN] **BD**

Nocturnal Emissions

Cathedral (Musica Maxima Magnetica eee 10) CD 70 minutes

Cathedral is a brilliant distillation of the sound of the last few Nocturnal Emissions albums. It takes their cyclic, repetitive, textural atmospheres and stretches them out, strips them down. There are five tracks on the CD (which comes with a very nice eight-page art booklet), with the longest achieving 24 minutes of languid, hypnotic bliss. The techniques aren't any great step on from those used on *Stoneface* or *Invocation of the Beast Gods*, with this album using similar looped sounds and echoed effects to build up its ambience, but the music has been much more carefully polished. Put this on and drift away. You probably won't want to come back again. **BD**

Les Nouvelles Polyphonies Corses

Les Nouvelles Polyphonies Corses (Philips 848515-2) CD 69 minutes

Les Mysteres des Voix Bulgares are the singers most often invoked in comparisons with these Corsicans. It's not entirely unfair: they both possess enchanting voices, seemingly bereft of all earthly ties, free to roam through truly celestial sound worlds. Les Nouvelles Polyphonies Corses are brought together for this album by Hector Zazou (who also involves well known musicians like Jon Hassell and Ryuichi Sakamoto). His main role is to provide ambient Enoesque electronics behind the voices. They sing both traditional chants and their own compositions, and although the album is less pure than the Voix Bulgares releases, this is every bit as beautiful. I can't review it: it's too gorgeous, too *singular*. **BD**

Nox

Rut (Odd Size Records OS 07) 10" 45rpm

More of what I've come to expect from Nox: rock music that somehow manages to avoid that genre's usual tedium. I'm not sure **how** it manages it - all the usual electric guitars and steady drumming are in there. Choppy, rhythmic guitar throb, squealing pig-guitar and no messin' about. But it grinds along with real purpose, lots of energy kept under restraint and all the more menacing as a result. The fact that Nox are coming at their music from a different background from "normal" rock groups is clear in the way that they avoid vocals and concentrate on creating an abrasive, vicious sound texture rather than producing "songs". This is what gives them a refreshing edge, and I like it. [Available from Odd Size] **BD**

Numb

Bliss (Oceana / Onslot Music 09547-341902) 12"/CD

As I write, these remix versions of the track from the *Christmeister* album are unavailable in Europe. Numb are one of the hardest bands on the scene nowadays, and *Bliss* is an immense percussive grind pumped along by Don Gordon's angered vocalisations. Three *Bliss* remixes: *Endurance*, *In Absentia* and *Fundamentalist* are all deep-throat, gore-laden, savagely successful works. The fourth track *Stiff* was previously only available on the Lively Art compilation *13*. Numb are the only successors to Skinny Puppy's position as terror merchants of hardbeat. They have no equals now. [Write for this release to: Onslot Music, 301-873 Beatty Street, Vancouver, B.C., Canada] **MR**

Nurse With Wound

Thunder Perfect Mind (Untied Diaries UD040) CD 57 minutes

Sister album to an identically titled Current 93 release, the two tracks here, *Cold* and *Colder Still* see Stapleton and Tibet joined by Colin Potter for an admittedly pretty chilly journey through a world of glacial frequencies, icy shards of sound. Combining academic musique concrete with more conventional abstract electronic music, *Cold* matches drones and mechanical rhythms to carefully recorded, isolated metallic creakings and clankings. *Colder Still* drops the more insistent rhythms, and adds in a few voices, leaving the body behind to allow the mind alone to explore its cavernous, empty space. If you're into abstract music this is a fine example, easily justifying the Nurse's rep, even though it lacks a lot of the spontaneous craziness of their earlier music. [Available through World Serpent Distribution] **BD**

Operation Mind Control

Receiver Generation (Chainsaw Cassettes CSC 017) MC 40 minutes

This cassette, which comes with a nicely designed little booklet, claims to document experiments on the "cause and effects" of sound. The eleven tracks consist mainly of hypnotic tape loop rhythms, coupled to various other fragments of cut-up found voices and odd sounds. It's an old formula by now, but still effective when done well. Sometimes energetic and sometimes more ambient, Operation Mind Control's textures are clear and engaging reworkings of that early "industrial" sound. Fans of the genre shouldn't hesitate to pick this up. [Available from Chainsaw Cassettes] **BD**

Bob Ostertag

Sooner or Later (RecRec RecDec 37) CD 43 minutes

This is played entirely on a digital sampling keyboard, using only two brief tape recordings as sound sources. The first is a recording of a young boy from El Salvador, burying his father, killed by the National Guard, and the second is a 20-second recording of Fred Frith's guitar playing. Ostertag's political commitment is unquestionable, but it's difficult not to have some misgivings about his deconstruction of this young boy's grief. The recordings are chopped up and reassembled, layered and slightly processed. It's much better than most sound disassembly, precisely because of the very strong focus produced by the limited raw material. What results is never comfortable entertainment. Ostertag manages to find both great sadness, terrible anger and a pathetic beauty in the sound texture that results. It's frequently powerful and disconcerting listening, but occasionally it's just ineffective improvisation. The best moments come both from those that remain most faithful to source, and those that make it most unrecognisable. [Distributed by Rec Rec Genossenschaft, Postfach, 8026 Zürich, Switzerland; or These Records in the UK] **BD**

Négligé

Pränatal Inferno (Archegon GON 1001) CD 64 minutes

Various Artists

The White Horse (Acteon ACTEON 12) CD 61 minutes

Throughout the history of live electronic music the most original work has come

from those artists who have shunned standardised electronic instruments, either designing their own circuitry (Gordon Mumma, David Tudor), using intermediate or adapted technologies (the Sonic Arts Union) or using acoustic sound sources as raw material for electronic processing (AMM, M.E.V.). The least original work has come from groups using synthesisers, which inevitably produce a rather bland and stereotypical rang of sounds. The mass marketing of standardised electronic instruments in recent years (especially the ubiquitous DX7) has precipitated a tidal wave of mediocrity, facile self indulgence and inconsequential keyboard doodling. The works featured on these two releases instantly confirmed my worst expectations and reinforced my conviction that all instantaneous musical technologies are best consigned to oblivion or dismantled into electronic junk that can be recycled, musically or otherwise.

Perhaps I'm being too harsh. Several friends to whom I have played these releases have found them to be mildly acceptable as ambient noise. My own leanings are more towards the more anarchic end of the avant-garde musical spectrum. [*Pränatal Inferno* available from Archegon, Günter Schroth, Hippelstraße 54, 8000 München 82, Germany for 30DM surface or 40DM airmail; *The White Horse* from Metamkine, 13 rue de la Drague, 38600 Fontaine, FRANCE] **RS**

Ordo Equitum Solis

Animi Aegritudo (Musica Maxima Magnetica eee 12) LP/CD

I'm not too sure about this one. I find it very hard to shrug off the images and greenery of "Robin The Hooded Man" which arose while listening to these medieval, mythologically inspired compositions. The actual music (harp, lute, piano, guitar, zither) does work extremely effectively, but Leithana's vocals are a little flat. The track titles might give you an indication of the OES sound: *Message to Pan*, *Notre Solitude*, *Reis Gloria* and *Vacuum Quaerens*. Assisted by Tony Wakeford of Sol Invictus, this **is** a fine album with an original and emotional content. [Contact Musica Maxima Magnetica, P.O. Box 2280, 50100 Firenze, Italy] **MR**

Organum & The New Blockaders

Wrack (Dom Bartwuchs DOM BW 06) 12"

This is almost, but not quite, the ultimate noise record. As ever, Organum shows his interest in metallic timbres by apparently scraping, bashing, drilling and grinding lots of metal, and T.N.B. show their interest in extremity by making sure that what results is as dense and intense as possible. Amidst all the high-pitched shrieking and clattering, it's possible, just, to detect a quiet bass synth line, and the gaps between tracks provide brief respite from the din. It's even possible to differentiate the tracks a little: *Part 3* is my favourite, with a backdrop of metallic reverberation. Noise addicts should seek this out without further delay: if it seems too short, just play it at 33rpm instead. [Contact Dom Bartwuchs, c/o Christoph Heemann, Horngasse 2, 5100 Aachen, Germany; or try the "industrial" mail-order firms] **BD**

O Yuki Conjugate

Peyote (Multimood MRC 011) 44 minutes

At last! They sure kept us waiting for this one, but it was well worth hanging on for. In the past, O Yuki Conjugate's music has tended to drift as much as it moved, but on this new release they've given in to the rhythm. These eight tracks all showcase delicious tribal drumming textures, over which the band add sympathetic keyboard textures and found noises. The closest artist I could compare this wonderful music to would be Jon Hassell, though without his straining trumpet gliding over the top. *Snake Charm* weaves tabla rhythms with an ululating voice over a steadily rising keyboard backing. The tension is gentle but slyly insistent, insinuating itself into your subconscious long before you are truly aware of it. Personal favourite track *A Darker Belief* shimmers and shudders beneath a delightfully dippy tuned drum loop. Other tracks rumble or judder their way into the darkest corners of your mind, summoning forth hidden emotions as magically as any shaman. Some would insist on labelling, cheapening *Peyote* with an 'ethnic music' tag, but its primal beauty, its deeply resonating magic, make it a music that deserves more than to be limited by any ghetto category. [Contact Multimood, Kunsportsavenyn 27, S-411 36 Göteborg, Sweden] **MG**

Pankow

Svobody! (Contempo Records CONTE CX169) LP/CD

A "best of" remix album this really. I personally felt that Adrian Sherwood's influence on their previous releases, *Freihurt fur die Sklaven* and *Gisela* detracted from their unique sound, making them showpieces for Sherwood's obsession with heavy dub beats. Happily (for me) Sherwood has not been an influencing factor on this release. Although some of the tracks are a good few years old now they still sound as fresh as ever. *Kunst und Wahnsin*, *Remember Me* and *She's Gotta Be Mine* flaunt with commercial success, yet they still manage to retain that uncompromising attitude that typifies the electronic music scene. *Svobody!* is some of the most danceable music to make the trip across the Channel; unfortunately it's probably still too dangerous for the majority. **MR**

Pankow

Walpurgisnacht (Minus Habens MHR 011 / Contempo tempo 166) 12"

Pankow recently won the Oscar-Signiorini 1991, a prize awarded to the best avant-garde and experimental band of 1990 by leading Italian contemporary arts magazine D'Ars. This prize enabled Pankow to release *Walpurgisnacht*, an eighteen minute track, composed and performed for the Florence Dance Festival 1990. The CD was initially only available with the D'Ars magazine, but has now been released on 33rpm one-sided vinyl by Minus Habens (with an etching on the blank side). *Walpurgisnacht* is typical of Pankow: a mix of dub beats, Alex Spalk's incisive, ironic vocals, wistfully echoing moaning montages, classical harmonies - it's all in there somewhere. The listener will experience numerous surprises throughout the different stages of the track which can be divided into three definite movements. I bet Pankow's performance at the Florence Dance Festival was an event not to be missed - ballet dancers and hard beat rhythms, what a fascinating crossover! Pankow at their best and most unpredictable. [Distributed by Contempo] **MR**

PBK

Domineer / Asesino / Retro (RRRecords) 3xLP Box Set

PBK has risen from one amongst many American cassette artists to become one of the better known musicians working in the experimental noise field today. This timely box set includes a new (1991) recording, *Domineer*; his much-reviewed 1988 album, *Asesino*; and a retrospective compilation. The new material on the first record consists of nine tracks of spartan, mechanical sounds. Like much of PBK's music, these take the raw noises and process them, loop them and montage them to produce an abstract music. It has as much interest in rhythm, atmosphere, texture and timbre as many other experimental musics, but the source material is the sort of thing most musicians spend their time trying to eliminate. A lot of the noises are sequenced in off-putting ways, or have associations that almost make you flinch (eg scratched records). But, as PBK amply demonstrates, noise is musically interesting in its own right, and it **is** possible to educate your listening so as to eliminate your normal associations.

Editor gets the final say again: O Yuki Conjugate's *Peyote*.

Asesino is vivid, militant industrial noise, modest and unadorned. Raucous, shredded noise to injure your ears. Paradoxically, I found it easier going than *Domineer*, as it seems slightly more rhythmically structured. It's certainly denser, texturally. The compilation is varied in quality, but contains a few of PBK's better pieces, including the previously unreleased *Process Formation Remix*, a restrained and highly rhythmic exploration of several mechanical atmospheres. The box set as a whole is a good introduction for anyone unfamiliar with PBK, or a nice collection for anyone who doesn't already have *Asesino* (or completists who do ...) [Available from RRRecords] **BD**

PBK

Profusion (Realization) 60 minutes

Sometimes avant garde artists take ordinary household sounds and manipulate them so successfully that the noise is transformed into an original, illuminating experience. Unfortunately, some other people take the sound of a faulty vacuum cleaner and make it sound just like a faulty vacuum cleaner. [Realization, 540 San Clemente, Ventura, CA 93001, USA] **MG**

PBK / Vidna Obmana

Fragment 3 (N.D.) MC

The third in N.D. magazine's series of face-to-face cassettes pairs together two musicians already known for their collaborative work (eg. *Monument of Empty Colours*, released by Vidna Obmana's Decade Collection). Vidna Obmana's side of the cassette acknowledges his usual primary influence, the ambient music of Brian Eno. It's the usual quiet selection of glacial timbres and tones, although here it builds up much more intensity than I've heard before. PBK's contributions adopt a quieter style than normal, combining layered mechanical loopings with various obscure clatterings and even some astonishingly musical synthesiser lines. Very much a departure from his earlier music, and very effective. The whole thing comes in a bookshelf package including interviews with both musicians. An excellent piece of work. [Available from N.D.] **BD**

P.G.R. / Merzbow / Tietchens

Grav (Silent Records SR9114) CD 66 minutes

Housed within a very nicely designed inlay cover, this disc is an experimental noise fan's wet dream: three of the best known names in the scene brought together by the mail system for these collaborative recordings. Sounds were supplied and mixed together by all three artists. P.G.R. and Tietchens pitch in with tapes and electronics while Merzbow's Masami Akita uses metal percussion and bowed metal. You wouldn't really expect the result to be sunlight and daisies, and of course it isn't: plutonium, stripmills and magnetic fields are the images that come to my mind instead. There's plenty of scraping, droning, clattering, oscillating, whirring and whooshing, but it's pointless trying to describe abstract music in terms of its components. Of the three pieces, each is reasonably representative of one of the three artists involved. *Three Hemispheres*, which brings Merzbow's metal to the fore, is easily the most painful to listen to, while the others are more subtly disturbing. The music is put together with tremendous skill; it's terrifyingly atmospheric; and of course it's very highly recommended. [Contact Silent Records, 540 Alabama, Suite 315, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA] **BD**

Phew

Phew (Les Disques du Soleil et de L'Acier CDSA 54016) 34 minutes

Originally released, in terribly limited numbers, on the Japanese indie label Pass in 1981, this record has long been one of the Holy Grails of any serious Can enthusiast. It features peculiar Japanese chanteuse Phew backed by Holger Czukay and Jaki Liebezeit, ably assisted by the late Conny Plank. It is a peculiar collection of songs, performed almost straight, but - just as you always know the Residents couldn't play anything properly if they tried - the music here is twisted and warped out of shape with every new combination of sounds and creators. On *Signal* bubbling bass and percussion fights against jangling guitars and Phew's strident singing in a way that reminds me of mid-period Fall of all people. *Dream* sees Phew mournfully intoning over a mixture of romantic piano and short-wave radio chatter. On the other hand, *P-Acidic* sounds like a mutant imitation of DAF. *Phew* is strangely appealing, exotic and different, and definitely very weird, though in exactly the opposite way you would perhaps think. It isn't really a great lost Can album, but it's certainly a wonderful rediscovered Phew album! [Les Disques du Soleil et de L'Acier, BP 236, 54004 Nancy, France] **MG**

Playground

Resilience (Dirter Promotions DPROMCD5) CD 55 minutes

For the most part *Resilience* is an energetic electro-thrash, with influences from punk through to industrial music (in its use of found voices and noise for track intros). Shot through with malice, it's bludgeoning stamina is something you'll either admire or abhor. For me, it was neither ambitious enough or muscular enough to keep my interest: compare God, or Joined at the Head, to see what they're missing. On the other hand, coming from a more conventional rock perspective this is a pretty creative album. [Distributed in UK by Pinnacle; World Serpent elsewhere] **BD**

Poesie Noire

Tabula Rosa (Antler-Subway AS5059) LP/CD

I'm not sorry to say that I haven't much time for Poesie Noire. Five years ago they were a rather uninspiring industrial band who released an album, half of which consisted of an interview with themselves. I thought they were a little full of it then; with this dire sell-out, *Tabula Rosa*, my views are confirmed. It's a remix album of vapid rave tracks that just don't gel together. They seem to inhabit their own tiny self-indulgent world, ignored by pop fans and industrialists alike. Nought out of ten. **MR**

Psyclones

Greatest Hits 1981-1991 (Ladd-Frith LF73) CD

My preconceived image of the Psyclones was of "another guitar-pop band". I couldn't have been further from the truth. Psyclones are one of those bands whose product differs with each release. This gathering of their chameleonic nature celebrates this diversity. All the hits are here! Brian Ladd and Julie Frith originally started life as a grunge rock cowabunga band judging by their earlier material: *Electric Tone*, *Stuck in a Rut* and *The Drug Store*. Their present state of being is anybody's guess. What makes them stand out from the ground is their electronic manipulation of voices. Elements of Foetus' maniacal-classical style, early Severed Heads, Husker Du, and even Zoviet France are all evident at different stages in their evolution. Yes, Psyclones have "the gift of noise", may they bring it to you. [Contact Ladd-Frith at PO Box 697, Eureka, CA 95502-0967, USA for a catalogue] **MR**

Pure Motorised Instinct

Between Intimacy and Elsewhere (Motorcade CADE 3C) MC

Coming in Motorcade's usual very nicely designed cover, *Between Intimacy and Elsewhere* pulls out eight tracks of instrumental electronic music. A soundtrack waiting for a film or a throwback to 80s New Age? Well, this is the atmospheric face of Nagamatzu, drum machines turned off, and effects boosted up. Very competent, and quite relaxing

Realization is a fairly new small American label, specialising in the abstract noise scene: music with few obvious relationships to the real world and which attempts to provoke a new way of listening. The aim is to turn unstructured sound, *noise*, into something listenable.

Realization make available the back catalogue of one of America's better known noise artists, **PBK**. One example, 1988's *Die Brücke* steps from gentle ambient drones through to storms of coarse, raw noise, structured as if it were any other music. Rather than seeing what patterns evolve from the chaotic noise, as his later works do, this imposes a structure on the noise, using the noise as if it were any musical instrument. As a result, it's a great tape, and more accessible than more recent PBK material, such as his first CD, a collaboration with **Asmus Tietchens**, titled *Five Manifestoes* (RZD-008). The 38 minutes of this CD explore various types of repetitive noise, incorporating some of Tietchens' hydrophonic recordings, high-pitched squealing, resonant clatterings and other, less easily nameable sounds. It's one of the least accessible of either musician's releases, drawing sounds out from the void, deep space sounds. The noises are almost totally freed from earthly influences, almost totally existing in an abstract field of pure sound. Also available is a new PBK cassette, *Profusion*, reviewed elsewhere.

Big City Orchestra and **Illusion of Safety** are two of the bigger names in American experimental noise, both with many releases to their names. Their untitled collaborative cassette (RZC-003) shows off a rhythmic style, looping, rolling, droning compositions. It's quite claustrophobic music, at times almost menacing. The approach to noise here is to use it as an atmosphere, to document noise as an emotion. Of the two, I've only heard B.C.O. before, and in a much less intimidating vein than this.

Thomas Dimuzio's *Sone Songs* (RZC-005) collects six live pieces from 1990, totalling nearly an hour of music. It's performed using digital samplers and processors, and tends towards the more ambient side of Realization's noise spectrum. It layers billowing clouds of quietly screeching noise against subdued fragments of voice and subtle rhythmic patterns to good effect. There's a great deal of variety, and even if tracks like *Black Stime Vice* are sometimes too conventionally "industrial" in their sound, it's generally original and pleasing. There are a few particularly bright and resonant moments, which create a nice contrast with the longer drone stretches. Noise that has been both domesticised and goaded into savagery.

Another artist whose work Realization aims to keep available is **Hands To**, whose cassettes on the Big Body Parts label are reissued in the Realization catalogue. A new Hands To recording is also available, *Eurean Recant* (RZC-004). One of my favourite Realization releases, these 1989 and 1990 pieces blur the edges of the noise to produce a swirling, turbulent sound environment, not unlike a blizzard at times. The noisier tracks could be the sound of a busy airport, or of carpet-bombing. Who can tell? Essentially, *Eurean Recant* is background noise, sounds heard through the wall, the ambient hum of everyday life transformed into music.

Architects Office are one group with no shortage of releases to their name, including a huge number of contributions to compilations. Their *9th Year Gala Performance* (RZC-006), recorded live in March '91, consists of noise in the technical sense: random data, information without meaning, interference. Recordings of various instrumentalists are mixed with ambient hisses, morse squiggles, radios, field recordings. You'll either find it to be an ingenious sampling from the information ether, or self-indulgent, slipshod collage: I think it contains its fair share of both.

Ron of RRRecords is responsible for a radio show as well as the label, and **Due Process**'s *RRRadio 53* (RZC-002) is a tape from one such radio broadcast. Ron take's tapes from various contributors (here including Korm Plastics, Schimpfluch and H.N.A.S.) and mixes them live to make the broadcast. It's some of the most difficult listening covered here, with a succession of gnarled, chewed up noise pot pourris and acetylene ambiences that can be very hard to get into. But like all noise, it possesses a language of its own, and can be quite emotional at times. I'll admit, however, that it's one of my less favourite Realization cassettes.

A reasonable introduction to all Realization's artists is the CD *As Yet Untitled* (RZD-001), which samples output from all the above plus people like sonic surrealist **Randy Grief**, **Arcane Device**, **The Haters** and **AMK**. It's at the same time consistent and diverse. Most artists find a niche somewhere in the abstract noise genre somewhere, but they're sometimes quite widely separated niches. As a result, it's not really listenable as an album. It never gets a chance to suck the listener into any of its particular noise-pools. If I'd heard it before the individual artists' work, it may even have put me off!

All of Realization's cassette releases are attractively packaged. Like a few other small labels, they've cottoned on to colour lasercopying, and their tapes are housed in colourful inlays adorned with appropriately abstract art. It's nice to see people who obviously care so much about what they're doing. Sometimes, there seems to be a bewildering variety of cassette labels in existence, but Realization is one of the more *focussed* that I've come across. **BD**

Contact: *Realization*, 540 San Clemente, Ventura, CA 93001, U.S.A.

Crucial chrome: Hands To's *Eurean Recant*.

soundtrack-styled music. Few obvious pointers (except Brian Eno on *Spiral*), because it's a little bit generic. It's also a bit **too** nice, I suppose, even bland if you're not in the mood to sink into it. But well worth hearing if cynicism hasn't killed your taste buds yet. [Available from Motorcade, 20 Wilmer House, Daling Way, London, E3 5NW] **BD**

Recoil

Bloodline (Mute STUMM 94) LP/CD 51 minutes

Faith Healer (Mute MUTE 110) 12"/CD Single 40 minutes

Alan Wilder yet again proves himself the dark horse of the Depeche Mode stable. His previous two Recoil albums, *1+2* and *Hydrology* were surprisingly experimental excursions into minimalist electronic music. Sadly, *Bloodline* rarely ventures off into similar areas, but despite its commercial electro-pop nature its a pretty fine release. Standouts include *Electro Blues for Bukka White*, rippling electronic pulsations set off perfectly against Bukka's sampled voice; two tracks mixing soft techno backing with Toni Halliday's enigmatic and ethereal vocals; and *Freeze*, the least obvious track on the album, and the only one to continue in Recoil's previous style. *Faith Healer*, with vocals by Nitzer Ebb's Douglas McCarthy is a bit tedious on the album, but the single is a different matter: the CD version stretches to 7 mixes. The *Trance Mix* is a nice piece of ambient techno, while LFO's *Disbeliever Mix* hits all LFO's usual depths. Ultimately, it's only for those with a taste for the commercial, but oh, if only all pop could be this way! **BD**

Hans-Joachim Roedelius

Piano Piano (Materiali Sonori MASO 90031) LP 43 minutes / CD 65 minutes

There are only **so many** things a solo pianist is able to do, but of course there are **so many** solo pianists that you might think the possibilities have long since been exhausted. Mostly, you'd be right. Roedelius is one of the more influential artists to come out of the early 70s German electronic music scene, but on releases like this you won't find anything at all adventurous. It's serene, contemplative, gentle and attractive music, but little more. The best pieces are those that allow the stronger piano timbres to come through, or add keyboards to the mix: *In Der Dämmerung* is fifteen minutes of quiet beauty. That's true of the album generally: attractive but insubstantial. [Through shops or contact Materiali Sonori, Via Trieste 35, 52027 San Giovanni Valdarno, ITALY] **BD**

Runzelstirn and Gurgelstøck

Würm? ... und innen sind sie wurmstichig (Hypnagogia Records GOG 02) MC

In a nice black-on-black cassette box, these recordings from 1988 to 1990 are intended for noise addicts only. It's not the fat, dense sort of noise, it's a thinner variety, the squeals and scrapings jerked out of silence. It sounds like two or three lunatics let loose in a domestic appliance shop with a toolbox and a tape recorder, poking and scraping the various items for sale. Some of the sounds are quite piercing: some of the mixing and juxtaposition creates a freaky, unsettling effect. If you like your music to have a high quota of eggbeaters and sanders, then Runzelstirn and Gurgelstøck are what you need to hear. If you don't, keep well back. [Available from Hypnagogia] **BD**

Sandow

Kanguru (Fluxus Records FL0004-1) LP/CD

This is strange. *Kanguru* is the soundtrack to a performance staged somewhere in Germany in late 1991. Consisting largely of hushed whispers, shouted rantings and the Neubauten-style regimented exclamations of the Sandow choir, set to an atmospheric background of mysterious found voice and textures, this release reminds me of the demonic chanting to be heard in the various Omen films. Very enjoyable, if a little confusing - it's all in German. **MR**

Satøri

Behold the Past (Mind Scan) MC

Similar in structure to the recent *Techno-Primitive Soundsystem* tape, mixing ethnic recordings or found voices with programmed rhythms and/or atmospheric noise, although without the techno beats, and with much more of an abrasive "industrial" feeling to it. It's less enjoyable, not because its harsher but simply because it's not as well put together. There are plenty of memorable moments, including the powerhammer destruction of *Say A Little Prayer*, some of more polished music and a faked New York phone company ad. [Available from Mind Scan] **BD**

Schmaalhaus Weltraum

Samovar / Dr Läderbär (Limur LSD-003) 7"

Imagine a cross between Depeche Mode and Jean-Michel Jarre, with a Swedish accent thrown in, and a bit of flute there too for good measure. Yes, whimsical sequenced electropop with a Scan accent. Tremendously jolly. Tremendously inconsequential. A typical single, really. [Available from Limur] **BD**

Conrad Schnitzler & Jörg Thomasius

Tolling Toggle (Fünfundvierzig 57) CD 61 minutes

I may be mistaken, but I think this is Con's first CD, despite more than 30 records and ridiculous numbers of tapes. Con, incidentally, was a co-founder of bands like Tangerine Dream and Cluster, although his own music has always been a lot less accessible. It's also nice to see that it's a collaboration with Jörg Thomasius, an East German musician now getting wider recognition. *Tolling Toggle* presents 18 tracks of abstract electronic music, mixing analogue and digital synthesis, samples and acoustic sounds, creating slightly bizarre, spartan little worlds, where the conventional sound is shoved face-to-face with the musical outsider. It's mostly too random for my taste, but it also produces some powerful and resonant moments. Weird noise fans should definitely look into it, but it has a lot to recommend it to open-minded listeners generally. [Shops, or contact Fünfundvierzig, Schmiedetwiete 6, 2411 Labenz, GERMANY] **BD**

Scott

Whatayamean? (Joots Group) MC

Perhaps too off-the-wall for some jazz-lovers, and possibly too jazzy for the rest of us? Scott Cadenasso writes and sings these ten songs, with instrumentation straightforward guitars, bass, percussion, sax, oboe and some doumbek too. Whatayaget is a relaxed blend of jazz with "world" music: ethnic percussion forming the backdrop to bass warbling and sax / guitar melodies. Scott's querulous voice stops it from drifting too far into muso territory, but his songs are lightweight, flimsy affairs, and *Whatayamean* remains far too inconsequential for me to recommend at all. [Available from Joots Group Records, P.O. Box 22423, Santa Fe, NM 87502-2423, USA] **BD**

Shock Corridor

Portrait of a Serial Killer (Kirk Out Kommunications KOK1) 12"

This is just what a new name needs to win them a few fans. Shock Corridor, now en route to Minus Habens, could, I suppose be pigeonholed neatly in some sort of grungy hardbeat genre, but that would be grossly unfair. In a stylistic field plagued by the derivative, unimaginative and just plain incompetent, Shock Corridor are a breath of foul air. Bass-heavy electronic sequences and pounding

drum machines create a driving, aggressive sound. The vocals (sort of Portion Control meet Skinny Puppy) are rough and raucous, like every similar group. All the tracks have plenty of individuality too. Where this 12" really scores is on its fourth and final track, *T1:8*, which loses the vox and dives deep into a thoroughly electrifying *Cubic*-style techno groove. Well worth getting hold of for this alone. [Contact Kirk Out Kommunications, 32 Hainault Avenue, Giffard Park, Milton Keynes MK14 5PA] **BD**

Sigillum S

Cybertantrick Quantum Leaps (Artware CD 3) CD 58 minutes

Sigillum S's brand of noise culture is one of extreme dynamics, blasting huge pulses of electricity across the otherwise quiet, ambient landscape. They match a ClockDVAesque fascination with the neural and electronic networks, the sensuality of the body, and the ecstasy of magick, with a willingness to soil themselves. No restraint here, Sigillum S plunge head first into their inspirations and paint the results large with tones, drones and crashes. It's a chaotic union of electronic and industrial musics, potent, passionate and rather grotesque. A special mention for their fine track titles (*Mother Sow Giving Birth Under a Lab Balcony* opens this CD and *Mouthwatering God Corporation* finishes it). Overall, it's a very enjoyable blend of the tonal and atonal. [Available from Artware] **BD**

Sloppy Wrenchbody

Pariah (KK Records KK072) LP/CD 44 minutes

Danish hardbeat! SW are a recent signing to Belgium's KK Records, and judging by this release, will prove to be a valuable acquisition. Lead singer, Mr Carlzberg, is a dead-ringer for Nitzer Ebb's vocalist; the music is a hybrid combination of hip-hop percussion, newbeat plastic fx and razored guitars. The overall effect is one of complicated, dense dance tracks, very much in the Skinny Puppy vein, circa *ViviSECTvi*. It took three sittings at very loud volume to appreciate the depth of these songs. *Sickness Dance* is an incredibly emotional piece, whereas *Burn 'em Back Alive* is probably too hardcore for most club DJs, yet eminently danceable nevertheless. You **have** to get used to this, then you'll be hooked. **MR**

Solar Enemy

Dirty vs Universe (Third Mind / Roadrunner TM 9268 1) LP

Having evolved out of early hard-beat combo Portion Control into what they presumably imagine is a modern dance group, this whole record is shot through with echoes of Solar Enemy's past. On some of the tracks the vocals sound as determinedly non-musical as ever; the music is a peculiar blend of hardbeat with techno dance, lacking the all-out energy of either. Initially I was very disappointed with it: it's not always groovy enough to make me dance and it's nowhere near heavy enough to impress me with its straightforward power. It certainly isn't as immediately impressive as techno divinities like Joey Beltram or LA Style, for example. Over time though, it has certainly grown. A Cabs-style cop-out or a genuinely mature voice? A slightly uneasy mixture of both. **BD**

Somewhere in Europe

Liturgy of Anguish (These Silences TST 6) MC

This is Somewhere in Europe's fourth cassette album, and continues with a similar style of neo-surrealist musical fragments. The recipe, where there is one, is straightforward rhythm and noise: apprehensive percussion entwined with peculiar alien rumblings and swashes of sound colour. They mix the more musical elements with found voices, tapes and sound effects to create miniature little worlds with more than a hint of David Lynch about them. One track from this cassette, *Beauty and Blood*, is a good example, a languid sea of amniotic fluid-sound through which a female voice mournfully carries. Other examples vary from the gentle but still slightly threatening synth atmosphere of *Evening Falls* to the industrial-music-by-numbers of *Slaughter*. There's quite a lot of textural variety on the cassette's ten tracks, but all share a common absinthe-scarred view of the world. Tasty. [Available from These Silences, 55 Perowne Street, Aldershot, Hants GU11 3JR, UK] **BD**

Splintered

Parapraxis (Intellectual Convulsion SPASM IV) LP/CD 65 minutes

Link / Candleskin / Head Wound (Dying Earth DE 001) 7"

Splintered are increasingly well known purveyors of grungy guitar cacophony, with occasional similarities to bands like Godflesh and Skullflower. I'd be hard pressed to call these 10 tracks (8 on the LP) "songs", and "compositions" might be pushing it too. They start, and they end, and they churn along in the middle, something like a relentless combine harvester driven by a screaming horror-film star. Like many guitar bands, it's noise as texture; you can feel the grain of it rising out of the persistent rhythms and blurred harmony. It's neither as exhilarating as, say, My Bloody Valentine, or as powerfully disciplined as Massaker, but *Parapraxis* is pretty diverse, ranging from squalls of ambient feedback through to dirty, dark grind. The single is cut from similar cloth, and aches quite nicely. An unswerving slog through still more scarred din. Fans of the genre should check them out now, the rest of you might want to wait for the next album. [Parapraxis distributed through Revolver in UK; or contact Intellectual Convulsion, 51 Bld. A. Blanqui, 75013 Paris, FRANCE; or try Fourth Dimension Records; Dying Earth can be reached c/o John, 13 Warren Close, Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey GU17 8EL] **BD**

Sprung Aus Den Wolken

The Story of Electricity (Disques du Soleil et de l'Acier CDSA 54015) CD 53 minutes

Sprung Aus Den Wolken are one of Germany's forgotten bands: although they share some qualities with Einstürzende Neubauten, it's only the latter who have found wide fame. This CD reissues the band's album from 1986/87 along with a single *Que Pa*. It's a disjointed view of the world, enacted with fragmented and angsty singing, lots of nervous percussion, and hesitant guitars and synths. It works with conventional rhythms, reconstructing them in its own personal way, and a strong sense of character comes through. It's alternately dull and delightful, never as far out as Neubauten but with some of the same visceral attitude to their music, some of the wires showing through. [Contact DSA, BP 236, 54004 Nancy Cedex, France; also available from Odd Size] **BD**

Stephen Stapleton & David Tibet

The Sadness of Things (Untied Diaries UD 037) CD 53 minutes

All the obsessive fans of Nurse With Wound or Current 93 will already have added this to their collections, but what can I say? Behind the gorgeous album cover lies an absolutely gorgeous album. Underpinned by a steady, soft rhythm, and with occasional brief spoken phrases interjected to make sure you're paying attention, the 31-minute *The Sadness of Things* is basically just a long, atmospheric soundtrack, with keyboards and unhappy violin and things. It's an astonishingly beautiful one for all that. The companion piece, *The Grave and Beautiful Name of Sadness* (by Stephen Stapleton and Geoff Cox) is similar but more synthetic, and a bit more disturbing in tone, with a few particularly intense moments that ought to frighten the life out of anyone who has turned the volume up a bit too much. Stephen and David both have ridiculously high reputations already, and this album can only earn them

even more respect. Very highly recommended. **BD**

Jack Stern

First Mission (North Corp) MC only

Colour lasercopying seems to be the technology of the moment - it's led to a vast improvement in the quality of cheap cassette covers, and this is another good example. The music consists of three tracks (plus remixes) of danceable techno electronics, classy and user-friendly spacey sequencers, upbeat and smiling Kraftwerkian pulsations. "Continuous play for all supersonic walkman pilots of the cosmos" says Ben, and I agree entirely. Earfood for space cadets! [£2.50 inc p&p from Ben Allen, 117a Great Victoria St., Belfast, N.IRELAND] **BD**

The Stinking Badger

Stabile Estimates MC C90

This is part of a fine tradition of underground cassettes - it comes in a handwritten and hand-coloured cover. Appearances can be deceptive, and it's too easy to be snide, but this was pretty much what I thought it would be: instrumental electronic music using a variety of synths and occasionally other things too. Like most "amateur" stuff it has its fair share of the nearly-glorious and the better-glossed-over. Moments where the imagination is quite inspired, and moments where it all goes dismally wrong. It's interesting enough music, with references from 70s cosmic music through to 80s synthpop, but the amateurish feel doesn't do *Stabile Estimates* any favours at all. This tape could have done with being edited to half the length. [For ordering details send SAE/IRC to Radius Mailorder, P.O. Box 16, Nottingham NG2 5EQ] **BD**

Stutter

Broken Snakes (Check) LP & CD 48 minutes

This is Broken Snakes' first non-US recording, and Check's first recording full stop. Check say that this is the first ever American band to be released on a Czechoslovakian label. Stutter are at heart a rock band, although influenced by all sorts of avant-garde, dance and electronic music styles. So there are plenty of samples and other strange noises tangled up in the guitar / vocals / drums based songs, and some stretches where the rock traditions are ditched completely. Given the genre, it's quite imaginative, but it couldn't really keep my attention. [Available from Check Records, Milan Kidon, 735 14 Orlová 757, Czechoslovakia] **BD**

Swains

Electric Soul (KK Records KK 068) CD 36 minutes

Poppy electrobeat with a strange nostalgia for the past. As well as those tacky whining synths all too prevalent during the early seventies, there are plenty of other references to the music of two decades ago. Harmlessly commercial, pleasant pop. Don't go expecting anything remotely resembling innovation: "danger" is not something *Electric Soul* is ever likely to be accused of. Occasionally it reminded me of several other bands: as well as horrible echoes of "baggy", I spotted the ghost of the Shamen several times. **BD**

Swamp Terrorists

Grow-Speed-Injection (Machinery MA9) LP/CD

Like their countrymen, The Young Gods, the Swamps are a bizarre mixture of electronic hardbeat and rock guitars. The group themselves call their sound "street tech beat". Following closely behind their 12" *Rebuff*, *G-S-I* takes the dance emphasis to extremes. *Braintrash* features the typewriter percussion of The Young Gods' *Envoye* overlaid with massive guitar riffs and growled vocals, stretching the dirge to spastic limb twisting movements. *The Vault* Parts I to III provide short atmospheric shafts of amber amidst the dark depths of *Ratskin*, *Skizzo Pierce*, *Rawhead* and *Green Blood*. These sharp titles are a precursor to forthcoming events. If you try to dance to the Swamp Terrorists you'll break your legs. **MR**

Technoprimatives

"Trans-European Express" Said The Stolen Song Brightly (Sorcerer Sound CX500) MC

Eeeek, new age music! Eleven tracks with names like *Journey of Orphee (In the Underworld)*. (Of course it was the bloody underworld - he didn't make a trip to Stoke-on-Trent, did he?) Midi guitar (triggering synthesisers) and very little else. Ummm, that's it. [Available from Sorcerer Sound Productions, c/o 34 Bassingham Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 4RL] Oh, sorry, the music, yes, of course. If you like the basic genre (instrumental abstract electronic) then you may like this. I think it's rather good, with a nice balance between simplicity, softness, complexity and edginess. It takes in everything from new age to the avant-rock of Fred Frith and the unbalanced whimsy of the Residents. Definitely a bit undeveloped, and sometimes hard to get into, but plucky stuff. **BD**

Terminal Cheesecake

Pearlesque Kings of the Jewmost (World Serpent WSLP 001) LP/CD

Even with the inclusion of a deliciously warped cover of the Residents' *Hello Skinny* and a great Blue Note parody sleeve, the last Terminal Cheesecake record, *Angels in Pigtails* (on Pathological), was something of a disappointment. It is a pleasure to report, then, that the new one, the first long-player on the groovy World Serpent label, shows that the band have rethought their strategy and returned stronger than ever. As always, the music is a mixture of disorienting dub, hardcore grunge guitars and peculiar samples, but there is a new found groove, a swing in the band's step now, that makes their work far more approachable without compromising their individuality and experimentation. Now they sound like Skullflower's grubbier little brothers let loose in a state of the art recording studio. The record works best in one massively oppressive, dope-hazed blur that pound its stomach-aching bass and beats into you with its massive fists. Very odd, way cool. [Distributed by World Serpent] **MG**

Terminal Power Company

The Hunger The Heat (Situation Two SIT92) 12" & CDSingle

The Hunger The Heat Remixes (Situation Two TPC1) 12"

Run Silent Run Deep (Situation Two SITU38) LP & CD 46 minutes

Terminal Power Company are obviously great cyberpunk fans (listing the likes of William Gibson and Videodrome as influences). It's a pity their music's not quite up to it though. Lots of hi-tech sounds, and death-obsessed lyrics, but the form's too conventionally rock-oriented. If the concepts are futuristic, then the music ought to ditch the out-of-date rock conventions to keep up. You can't reflect the future if you're still stuck in the past. For pop cyberpunk music that's not as half-hearted as this, try Hoodlum Priest or Man Machine instead. If you kept the melody the same, and swapped the bleeps for electric guitar, *Run Silent Run Deep* would sit on the heavy metal racks. Of the above, only the remixes of *The Hunger The Heat* are at all up to the job, stripping things down and letting the machines breathe more clearly. **BD**

This Heat

This Heat (These Records HEAT 1) CD 48 minutes

Deceit (These Records HEAT 2) CD 40 minutes

Soon to be followed by a collection of other early material entitled *Repeat*, these two items are the long-awaited digital reissues of This Heat's "seminal" classics. They're very much "of" a certain time and place: a time when the threat of the a-bomb was still a primary source of angst and uncertainty. For their time, This Heat were a fairly far-out bunch, although it's certainly possible to spot influences from earlier experimentalists like Faust. The music draws on rock, jazz and the avant-garde, cutting up, stretching out, retexturing and otherwise playing with expectations. Instrumentation included the orthodox - guitars, clarinet, drums, bass - and the unorthodox - tape loops and manipulation. Of the two albums, *This Heat* is more abstract, while *Deceit* is a more lyrical lump of shrapnel. Both are discordant, off-key, down-to-earth and away-with-the-fairies, spaced out and strapped down. It sounds terribly dated and little like almost anything you'll hear today. It's generally sufficiently morose to make Morrissey sound like Timothy Leary on uppers. The singing is perhaps the greatest aid to suicide since the invention of the razor blade. The colour is a dirty grey - the appearance of Throbbing Gristle and their occasionally similar (if less musically competent) noisy dirges at the same time is surely no coincidence. Watch almost any social realist 70s TV to see why! Most of the late 70s / early 80s reissue nonsense currently plaguing us is startlingly unexciting stuff: the shock of '82 is simply passé in 1992. Music has progressed sufficiently for the novelty and glamour of the likes of T.G. to begin to pall. But This Heat are still well worth hearing: in a world of positivity and ignorance, they're refreshingly hope-less. [Available from Recommended] **BD**

Asmus Tietchens

Seuchengebiete 2 (Syrenia 1) CD

On a subsidiary of Musica Maxima Magnetica, Tietchens' second exploration of the "infested areas" focuses on the actual physical processes of water running through wastepipes, and the noises that these actions generate. The basic sounds were recorded on a three track tape machine via two condenser microphones and one contact microphone. The captured sounds have been treated and processed extensively to achieve a remarkable end product.

Some noises are processed more than others, having the effect of transforming the watery sounds into harp-like string arrangements. At other times, insect communication, a hive of subterranean activity, an insistent vibration pervades the track *Hydrophonie 12. Hydrophonie 8* patters along incessantly, glass shivers, ice melts. I swear I could hear voices in there! Tietchens stresses that there is no message to be found in this recording. For myself, it offers proof that life is noise; that everything has an identity through sound, through image, through texture, and that we take these characteristics for granted. The concept behind *Seuchengebiete 2* is interesting, the result is enthralling. [Contact Syrenia, P.O. Box 2280, 50100 Firenze, Italy for information] **MR**

Triptic of a Pastel Fern

Star Versus Cube (Poison Plant) LP 18 minutes

This record contains music that, for want of a better description, fits neatly into a genre called "weird". Bizarre lyrics, freaked out music somewhere between electropop and avant-jazz, bizarre bizarre bizarre. In terms of attitude, there are quite a few similarities with Negativland, particularly their earlier stuff. It's perhaps a more musical Negativland without the statements or the deluge of samples. If **that** idea appeals, then this record ought to as well. On the other hand, if the word "wacky" sends shivers down your spine, avoid. Better than anything I'd heard from them before. [Available from Poison Plant] **BD**

Simon Fisher Turner

Edward II (Mute IONIC 8) CD 68 minutes

As ever, Simon Turner's soundtrack incorporates everything from pop, melded out of equal parts Moroccan, Elizabethan and 80s rhythmbox influences, through to the most abstract soundtrack drones imaginable. Voices and sounds from the film are woven unobtrusively back into the soundtrack, and what results remains good music even without the film to back it up. At its least corporeal, its ominous bass hum sounds like it emanates from some unfathomably deep, black cavern. At other times the melodic guitars couldn't be more direct and poignant. Throughout, it's audacious and ingenious, a treat from one of the world's less conventional soundtrack composers. **BD**

U-Tek

Der Mass Der Dinge Ultra Remixes (New Zone Records) 12"/CD

Presenting five mixes of an influential techno anthem from last year. U-Tek is another vehicle for Severen Ni-Arb of X Marks the Pedwalk; here he reveals his acknowledgment of the race scene, and this is a stormer! A combination of conventional techbeat and traditional electronic body music, with some of the catchiest German vocals to be heard since Kraftwerk's *The Model*. Teutonic credibility abounds. **MR**

Vomito Negro

The New Drug (Antler-Subway AS5045) LP/CD

Vomito Negro is Latin for "black vomit", a phenomenon that arises in the last stages of yellow fever, when the patient throws up his putrefied intestines and ultimately dies. Can't you just **guess** what this release sounds like? The problem is that electronic and experimental music is ideally suited to such morose and macabre topics. Just as contemporary pop songs become cliched dealing with topics such as love and boyfriends, so electronic music is rapidly becoming overrun with these dark topics. Different interpretations ensure that interest in the "scene" is sustained. Vomito Negro's ideas are as valid as the next, but I feel that they must begin to widen their subject coverage. I feel a shift of emphasis is around the corner for many electro-bands. Vomito Negro are one of the more competent players in these genres, and I hope that if they were to change their outlook on life, that they do it more convincingly than Front 242. **MR**

The Wallmen

International House of Juju (Dead Judy Records) 7" 5 minutes

Upbeat American indiepop from a very standard four-piece. Chirpy, whimsical, and quite dispensable. Sorry guys! [Available from Dead Judy Records, 7711 Lisa Ln., N. Syr, NY 13212, USA] **BD**

Will

Pearl of Great Price (Third Mind TM 9269-2) LP/CD

The music that should be played in places of worship throughout the land. If God is going to respond to a form of prayer, then this is that prayer. When viewed in comparison with FLA's various projects, Will is a truly original voice. Never has music sounded so threatening and yet so religiously sincere simultaneously. I would imagine this experience is way up there with meeting Himself face-to-face: awe inspiring. The combination of classical, hardbeat and electronics is like no other. Lovecraft, Dante, Derleth, Ligotti and Campbell write to soundtracks such as Will. The dead really can dance. **MR**

WMTID

Pale Saint (D.O.R. ADOR 101) MC/LP/CD 64 minutes

Yes, it's the return of the New Romantics! This is a more commercial WMTID than I've heard before, bringing to mind Ultravox, New Order or Depeche Mode rather than any harder antecedents. Occasionally there are hints of music post-'86, but sadly all too rarely. Oh, it's all very nicely done, and if you're a hopeless nostalgic then you'll probably love it. If not, you're more likely to find it an irritating antique. **BD**

X10

Semblance (Antler-Subway AS5055) LP/CD

X10's *Semblance* is an interesting oddity, being the collaborative effort of Marc Verhaegen, Niki Mono, Mark Ickx (A Split Second) and cult experimentalist Vidna Obmana. The majority of the tracks are cautious outings, nervously feeling and finding their strengths, finally settling into consistently shifting textures that highlight Mono's searching vocals. The exceptions are three tracks featuring Mark Ickx, including the 12" *Repulsion / Phantom Limb*, which are typically aggressive statements, out of place on such a restrained release. The project holds much promise. The thin steady percussion of their first 12" has largely been replace on this album by minimal pieces secreted together by Mono's fragile, yet deeply emotional expressions. Verhaegen's interests are shifting from the morose to the exploration of the wondrous, the music is opening its eyes, reflecting its creator's new outlook on life. **MR**

X10 featuring Tec Trance

X10 featuring Tec Trance (Antler-Subway AS 5068) LP / CD 62 minutes

Marc Verhaegen's latest venture envelops the talents of a quartet from Germany, Tec Trance, who formed in 1990, and have grasped this opportunity with some aplomb. At times this sounds like a European Consolidated; Tec Trance's input is not drowned out by Verhaegen's presence, although his love of processed, antiseptic, stainless-steel rhythms is evident throughout many of the eleven tracks. The combination of two very different electronic styles is one of interest. Tec Trance (like KK's Swains) are heavily influenced by the hip-hop beats and arrangements which are creeping into much of today's electronic output. What Verhaegen does it dehumanise these exertions to a strange, transparent plane, exemplified on such tracks as *Spirit World*, *The Ice* and *Liquid*. Cleansing. **MR**

X-101

X-101 (Mute / Black Market MKTMLP 2) mini-LP

Six screaming hardcore techno acid tracks, apparently created in Germany if the label is anything to go by, but remixed by dance heroes Underground Resistance and the Vision in the US. It's all rather nasty, brain-mangling stuff, about as at home on your average disco dancefloor as a short-circuiting ED-209, and is to be explored by all those who find most electronic music just too damn sedate. **MX**

X Marks the Pedwalk

Freaks (Zoth Ommog ZOT 5) LP/CD

Cenotaph (Zoth Ommog ZOT 19) 12"/CD

The long-awaited debut LP from X.M.t.P. is here, and it has reawakened my enthusiasm for the hardbeat genre which was blighted with the same affliction as house music: too many bands producing much too similar results. *Freaks* is intense, sweating, constructive electronics. X.M.t.P.'s unique fusion of industrial and techno is immaculately produced. Listening to tracks such as *Swastika*, *Express My Sentiments Entirely* and *The Shot* really gets the adrenalin flowing. A welcome return to the underlying philosophy of electronic body music: Hit 'em Hard! With *Cenotaph* they continue this trend. The title track is typical beat-pulse-sample dance, nasty enough for the clubs. The samples employed weld themselves naturally to the percussion. A sampled voice expressing words of several syllables can be just as effective as a drum machine. *Never Dare to Ask* and *Helpless Deadly Mix* support XMTP's quest for programmed perfection. Complex, ultimately rewarding. **MR**

Various

4x4 (Ladd-Frith LF 76) CD

A superb compilation. At the forefront of the alternative music movement in the US, Ladd-Frith has collected together sixteen bands whose styles range from madcap Japanese electro-grunge-thrash (Kyoufu Shinbun), to Nirvana-like rock (Death & Taxes, Savage Republic), to stormy industrial noise (Trance, In The Distance and Nightmare Lodge). Special mentions must go to Gravity, their *Cargo Ship 17* is wild, "Lost in Space" acid-electronics, and Thunder Orchestra, whose *Pillarbox* is one of the most original industrial mantras I've heard in a while. Of note also are Blackhouse, Psyclones and Jelly Road. You really should purchase this! [See Psyclones review for address] **MR**

Various

Beets (Ralph / TECTones TEC 90901) LP/CD 43 minutes

Finally dragging itself across the Atlantic several years after the first adverts for it appeared, this follow-up to Ralph's groovy 'folk' collection *Potatoes* turns the spotlight on 'jazz', though in many cases what results is a music very far removed from the usual Ralph suspects (Snakefinger, Club Foot Orchestra, Fred Frith) to more eclectic art-school choices like Tom Cora, Winston Tong and the wonderfully named Machete Ensemble of San Francisco. As the sleevenotes suggest "jazz buffs may raise an eyebrow at these expressions of jazz, as many of the traditional rules have been challenged, and even broken." Well, sod it, that's what they're there for! **MG**

Various

Charmed (Poison Plant) LP

Charmed belongs to that group of compilations which forgets thematic consistency in favour of diversity, but is far from a typical example. The music is varied but not ridiculously so, stretching from energetic surrealism à la Residents from Triptic of a Pastel Fern through to the impressionistic acoustic guitar of Brain Gingrich, tainted with shades of Windham Hill. Highlights included Todd Fletcher's effective and atmospheric contribution *The Murmuring Voice*, Cyrnai's biomechanical rhythms, and the subterranean crypt-tour provided by Paul Lemos and Joe Papa (of Controlled Bleeding). All of the ten tracks keep their heads well above water, so this is overall a good though unspectacular compilation. [Available from Poison Plant] **BD**

Various

Faces and Images (Limur Records LP02) LP

While not wishing to condemn all Swedish acts in one foul sentence, I must say that I have yet to come across many convincing attempts at electronic body music / hardbeat, with the exception of Oil In The Eye. Having said that, the band Verschwende Deine Jugend are excellent: the one track that really "goes for it" on this Limur 1991 compilation. *Source of Conflict* is a massive thunkforce of rhythm. Everything else, including groups with such intriguing badges as Boiling Brain, + Christ and Pet Cemetery, are bland Depeche Mode copyists. The Mode must be **so** popular in Sweden it's

a little scary. The majority of these bands haven't really attempted anything original. [Available from Limur?] **MR**

Various

Fairy Tales and Myths (3rio Art) MC

I like this tape so much that I'll even ignore its status as a limited edition. It's part of 3rio Art's attempts to put the myth back into music, to restore its position as the foundation of ritual and magic. 16 artists are featured, providing a mixture of experimental rhythmic music using hypnotic tape loops and ambient music relying on a more gentle mesmerism. It's hard to pick highlights (although I will mention Pier Luigi Andreoni's excellent *Whispers*) as the music is mostly of a high standard. Very nicely presented, and fairly consistent in style, it's one of the cassette underground's definite successes. [Available from 3rio Art] **BD**

Various

Grit From the Pit (Mongolian Tourist Board MTB3) MC C60

One of the cooler label names in existence brings us this compilation cassette. Fourteen obscure bands, maybe all British, maybe not, I don't really know. It's all very variable, ranging from the singer with the acoustic guitar through various shades of rock to the squashed tape collage produced by factor X. My favourite bits include tracks from Crocodile Smiles, stylish but short wailing rock music, and some chuggalong techno-rock with Porkhead, but it's not a great cassette. There's nothing to recommend it over many other such cassettes, although stylistically it should go down best with very open-minded rock fans, into psych-rock for example, and able to cope with some of the noisier, less competent moments. [Available for £3 from the Mongolian Tourist Board, R. Clarke, 76 Sullivan Court, Fulham, London SW6 3DB] **BD**

Various

Jailhouse Rock (Hypertonia World Enterprises) MC

Released originally by Yecch on the 10th anniversary of the death of "the most decent, democratic, christian and bigot american singer that ever was", this cassette brings together ten versions of *Jailhouse Rock*, from Norway and elsewhere in Europe. It's utterly unlistenable, but also the perfect gift for an Elvis-lovin' relative. All the artists rip the song apart in their own haphazard way, but none match up to, say, the Residents' alien take on the song. Un Chat's cheap-and-cheerful synthpop version, and Den Infinitive Forening's monotonous, lugubrious rendering are the most amusing; the rest will only really appeal to Elvis-haters; or Residents fans interested in exactly how many different ways it's possible to demolish a single song. [Available from Hypertonia] **BD**

Various

Komotion International Volume 2 (Spirit FTD 008) LP/CD

Limited edition fund-raising sampler of bands and individuals involved with the Komotion Arts Centre in San Francisco. As with this sort thing, there is a wide range of styles, from bad poetry to bad punk rock. The selling point for any clued-up **E S T** reader, however, is bound to be the pair of unreleased tracks from Consolidated and Hiphoprisy respectively, the latter represented by an acoustic cut from Michael Franti and Charlie Hunter. Neither are in any way essential, though the former's *Censorship is Just a Smokescreen* crashes along as nicely as anything of theirs ever did without the benefit of a Jack Dangers production. On the whole, though, for over-moneyed Consolidated boosters only. [Spirit Music Industries, PO Box 170195, San Francisco, CA 94117, USA] **MX**

Various

Nature Morte 1 (E'Ostrate) MC

An excellent package, this cassette comes in a plastic case with several well-designed cards carrying text and art from the contributors. Five musicians are represented, all falling somewhere into some sort of "abstract post-industrial" category, and mostly producing some very fine music. Gregory Whitehead plays monastic chanting over breaking glass and children's voices; Abner Malaty plays Nurse With Tietchens at length; Vidna Obmana an excellent uneasy lush soundtrack. Cranioclast on the other hand give La Monte Young a dentist's drill, and Luciano Dari is evidently a Hafler Trio fan. If you like the genre, this is easily one of the best compilations I've seen. [Contact E'Ostrate, c/o M. Benarrache, 5 Impasse Saint James, 33000 Bordeaux, FRANCE; or various mail order distributors, eg Anomalous in USA] **BD**

Various

Spreading the Virus (Sentrax SET 1CD) CD 70 minutes

Over an hour of stark grinding mayhem compiled by the fine gentleman who writes the Onslaught column in *Music From The Empty Quarter*, and damn fine most of it is too. Some of the names present will already be top of your list of favourite noise-mongers: Controlled Bleeding (who also appear in their Fat Hacker and Joined at the Head guises, greedy bastards), God, Techno-Animal, Painkiller and New Mind. Others, such as Jouissance and the wonderful Multicide may be unfamiliar to you, but not for long. I could probably live without the slightly more normal hardcore thrashings of Nottingham's finest Fudge Tunnel, Force Fed and Meatfly, but since that city is where this was compiled their presence is understandable. On the whole though, *Spreading the Virus* will find a home wherever the sheer terror of noise is welcome. Good one! [Sentrax, 105 Harcourt Road, Nottingham NG7 6PX] **MG**

Recommended: *Nature Morte.*

Various

Sunday's Punch Telegraphed Issue #1 (Rays and Genius Collective) MC

All tracks on this nine artist compilation were supposedly recorded using the "Bedini Audio Spatial Environment", a stereo imaging processor: I couldn't really hear what difference it made, although the recording quality was generally slightly poor. The tracks chiefly come from the experimental post-industrial noise scene. It's mostly good stuff, consistent and well-focused. These sound textures could appeal to fans of electronic music as well as lovers of industrial atmospheres. Highlights? Dark, rippling machine noise from Dovetonsil Choir; Dave Clark and Walter Drake's very ominous oscillations; and the energetic tribal atmospheres of IAM Umbrella. Maybe the B.A.S.E. did make some difference, because this is an unusually fine compilation. [Available from Rays and Genius Collective, P.O. Box 5453, Glendale CA 91221-5453, USA] **BD**

Various

Technopolis 3 (Muzic Research) LP/CD

Muzic Research is the organisation behind the emergent techno cultures encompassing three loosely-labelled styles - "the united worlds of techno, aggrepo and electronic body music". The artists featured are mainly from Germany, Belgium and Austria, and include such luminaries as U-Tek, Laetherstrip, X Marks The Pedwalk, Dance 2 Trance and the unforgettable Armageddon Dildos. Fourteen tracks split themselves unconsciously into the three groupings mentioned above. Metropolis are technophiles, their *Time of War Nintendo Remix* raises the hackles. X Marks The Pedwalk present a remix of *Abattoir*, their massively successful club hit of 1991, in Germany at least. You won't find more aggressive beats elsewhere. Konzept affront us with *Human Transmission*, programmed to alter body structure with its

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energetic scrambles. *Technopolis 3* is an ideal introductory purchase for the techno fan who's been afraid to sample the harder elements that comprise electronic body music. You can enjoy your beloved trance rhythms **and** take a walk on the dark side of the mind. If you really want to discover a challenge for the dancefloors then buy this! **MR**

Various

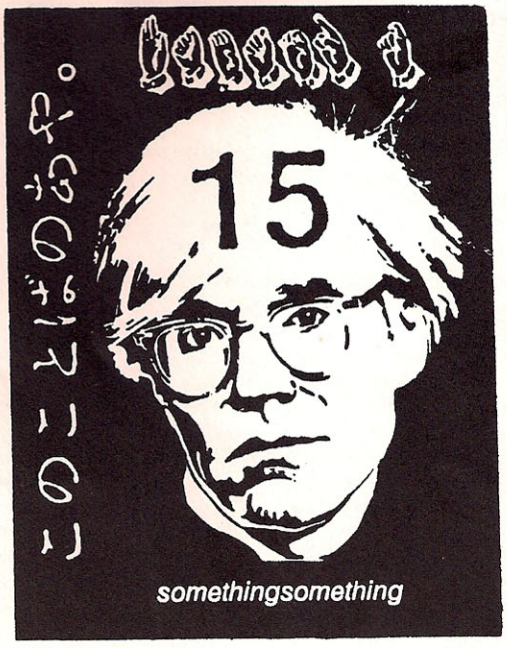
UK Electronics Vols. 3 & 4 (Mind Scan) MC

These two new volumes in Mind Scan's compilation series introduce quite a few artists new to me. Unlike other compilations, the artists sometimes have more than one track on the tape, which obviously helps to get a better idea of what they sound like. Amongst the most satisfying contributions here are Satori's ambient electronic pulsation, *Mali Rain*, from the Satori cassette reviewed last issue; some very enjoyable spacebeat from Dreamcore; Another Headache's imaginative and disturbing slice of atmosphere *The Infinite Soul*; and factor X at his best with *I Love You*, but surprisingly, given the low-key nature of these cassettes, there were few serious disappointments. Both cassettes seem to have slightly more of an "electronic" styling to them than previous "industrial" Mind Scan productions. They are good introductions to new or undiscovered musicians, and it's especially nice to see that there are still plenty of fresh names on the scene. [Available from Mind Scan] **BD**

Various

Walkman Meltdown Vol.1 (Hypertonia World Enterprises HWE067) MC 60 minutes

The first in Hypertonia's new compilation series consists only of cover versions. It varies from tedious geetar-band stuff to the post-Residents deconstructionism. Not one for die-hard genre fans of the New Blockaders, T-99 or Steve Reich, but varied enough personal stereo pleasure for those with less fussy tastes, able to sit through the inevitable quota of duds. Special treats include Hungary's Kampec Dolores, simple but very effective singing and atmospherics with hints of Dagmar Krause and Nico in there; Blind Melon Gatemouth's impressively languid *Walk on the Wild Side*; and the Evolution Control Committee's unsubtle parodies. [Available from Hypertonia for £4, postage included] **BD**



THE STATE.

It's hard to write about The State without writing about history. Steve Tanza, painter and the musician behind The State, cofounded Bourbonese Qualk, with which he remained involved from its 1981 beginnings in Liverpool to 1987. With Bourbonese Qualk, he established the Recloose Organisation, the record label which released recordings by Het Zweet, Muslimgauze and Club Moral, as well as their own. Taking over the Old Ambulance Station in London in 1984, they created a base for film and art exhibitions, and performances by groups like Test Dept and Nocturnal Emissions, as well as the Jesus and Mary Chain, Shop Assistants, Conflict and others. Despite idealistic ambitions, the sheer grind of trying to maintain enthusiasm in the face of apathy, combined with harassment by local government, eventually killed the Ambulance Station. At the same time, Stanza studied at Goldsmiths Art College, and he has exhibited his paintings ever more widely. His video installations have travelled to Spain, The Netherlands and Italy, amongst others.

Bourbonese Qualk continues on its own way without him, and he has devoted himself to his new project, the State.

The video label Provision was started in 1986, with the aim of "releasing video art and music from other artists within the field who could not find an outlet for their videotapes". To date, performers such as Etant Donnes, Muslimgauze, Club Moral and Autopsia have contributed. Stanza has also transformed Recloose into Sound Sound, a music label devoted to The State and allied artists.

Almost all The State's work deals with the city in some way. His paintings incorporate an urbanist aesthetic, depicting and distorting the geometries and patterns apparent in the urban landscape of South London where Stanza lives. The videos that he has produced contain similar images. *Return to Order*, videos made for Bourbonese Qualk's music explore a variety of textures, heavily processed video images filtered, manipulated and superimposed. In keeping with the Qualk's musical miserablism, it's a desolate, stark piece of work, grey in tone despite the bright colours.

Similarly, *Artitexture* limits itself to the use of urban geometries as texture. Intended for showing on several video screens at once, and also produced in the form of wall-papers for more conventional display, the textures take fragments of the city, replicate them and render them almost unrecognisable through colour processing, so that the urban feel remains present, detached from the obvious content. For its time, it was quite adventurous, and the textural concept behind it remains interesting, but video technology has now left it far behind.

Stanza: "It's not pop video material. Over the last few years more and more people have got access to this equipment. A lot of those videos were done in 1986-87. Since then there's been a whole revolution. People can get into studios and mess around with edit suites, chroma-key and so on. I can look back on them, and think that some of them are all right. A lot of them aren't. At the same time, it was quite a challenge to try and be given studio time, and come out with a product.

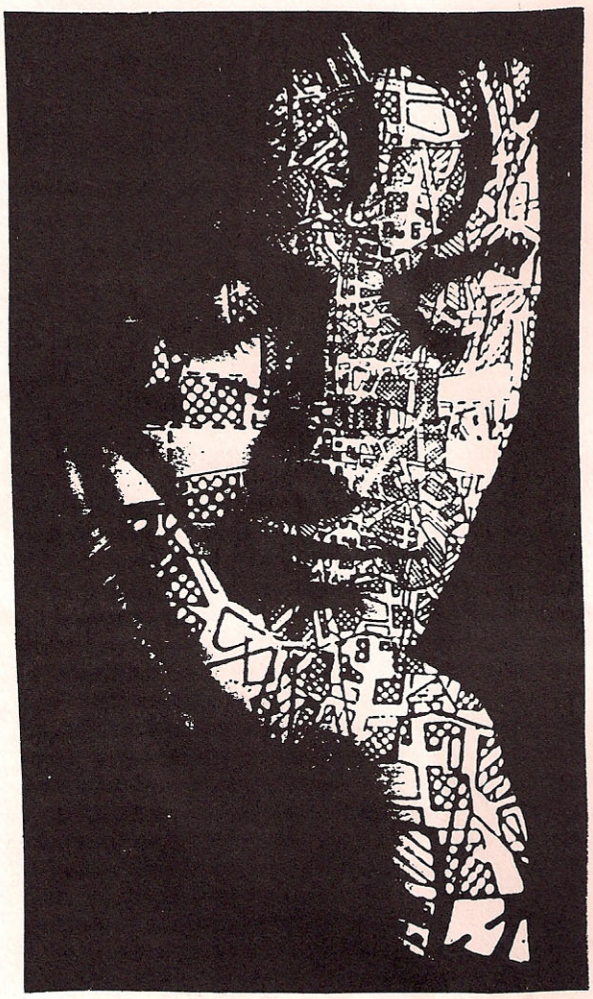
"I used to take the front of a lot of machines when the technicians weren't around and mess about. You can mess around with the video EQ similarly to the sound EQ, take the tapes from one studio to another, link up loads of machines that you weren't supposed to do. And you come up with something like *Artitexture*. These days of course it's done at the push of a button, which is where all the computer people have got things right."

Although Stanza retains a great interest in video as an art form in its own right, he's unconvinced that it has been explored even superficially yet.

"The things that are successful on video are really only things that are of a performance of another art form.

Video alone, as an artistic medium ... you can cite Eno, or David Hockney, or Warhol, but they really did nothing.

"*Artitexture* is just based on various colour field things. Basic artistic values from painting placed onto another medium. Having said that, watching it does give you a completely different appreciation of your environment. One of the best audio-visual experiences that I've ever had was watching the Philip Glass films, *Koyaanisqatsi*, *Powaqqatsi* [directed by Godfrey Reggio]. They



create a disorienting illusion ... allusion of what your environment's about."

A more recent video, *Conundrum*, attempts something completely different. The stage is for the most part the same: dismal tower blocks, demolition sites etc, but it's less a film about the urban texture than it is a film about urban alienation, and about the cyclical nature of urban development. It repeats images both of the countryside and the city, of demolition and reconstruction. Stylistically, it has a similar visual feel to the experimental 8mm and 16mm films of the late sixties and seventies. What's most striking about it, even when it features people, crowds of them walking through the city, is its sense of detachment, of alienation. There's no contact with these people, they move past as if asleep.

"I think the feeling came, because the motifs that you see, all those things are to do with the sixties architecture that still exists in London today. The big thing for me was the whole issue about postwar urban redevelopment. Despite how much money was offered, it just didn't seem to work. The council estates. The fact that they built high-rise blocks, and didn't put the terraced houses back and the families back where they wanted to be."

Along with the whole modernist art movement, particularly groups like the International Group, and others like the Situationist International, Stanza has had a long-term interest in urbanism: in the planning and architecture of the urban environment, and how it affects those who have to live within it.

"The architectural principle definitely has to do with the function: it relies on the function and the content. The design principle always denies that. It always has, because if it hadn't, it would have been successful. I think over the last few years there has been a complete reevaluation of this. The *architect* should live in it. It's like building the beautiful form just for the hell of it. You can do that with music and you can do that with painting because they have a singular existence. There is no audience involved until you invite them there. But with a domestic dwelling there's no invitation. People have to live in them, and in that sense the whole modernist ethic has failed."

Although *Conundrum* deals directly with the alienation produced by the city environment, The State's other work, both visual and musical, approaches it almost as a source of material. The paintings and videos use the repetitive geometries of sixties building as their basis. His music also creates itself around relentless, mechanical rhythms, and the other instruments tend to provide a distinctly depressing coloration. It's music for the unsettled and the paranoid. His *Schizoid* cassette, available from Sound Sound, employs synthetic and acoustic rhythms, marchbeats and mechanical pulsations. The atmospheric drones lack definition, waver elusively. At times distorted vocals come through a pounding beat as a frustrated response to it all.

"Sometimes I'd like to deny the political stance. A lot of the images stem from a sort of urban, ecological, social stance, and the denial of that does lead to a pure aesthetic within music and painting. That's why the painters did it and that's why the likes of Asmus Tietchens do that.

"There's more to life than just art. There you are talking just about pure aesthetics. I **am** definitely interested in just the pure aesthetic within the forms that I work with. But the thing that contradicts everything, is that the more successful pieces are often the ones that deny the content, that are just involved in the pure aesthetic. The pieces on *Conundrum* that have no references to anything, the paintings that have no references to anything,

the graphics that don't involve any text, they hit another core completely."

I'll admit to feeling a little bit uneasy about all this. What The State is doing is taking fragments of real life, and removing the context. The images are deconstructed: the background to them is removed and all that's left is the aesthetic. This isn't a block of flats in which people live: it's a repeating pattern of squares and rectangles once transformed by The State's art. The paradox is that the more the context is dispensed with, the more "successful" the art may become, simply because it's purer, more focused, less like a straightforward depiction of real life. It's here, in the narrow gap between art and politics that The State somehow survives.

"The *Control* video is a conglomeration of the same thing, bringing all these forms together. For me it's a tying up. The whole process of *Control* is just a reevaluation of all these ideas. Hopefully, I've got closer to the aesthetic that I've been trying to state. There is no absolute within it, so you can try again and again to get closer to it. If you say 'is something successful' it assumes the possibility that it could be a failure. There is no success and there is no failure. It's irrelevant within the working process. The most important thing is just to keep on working.

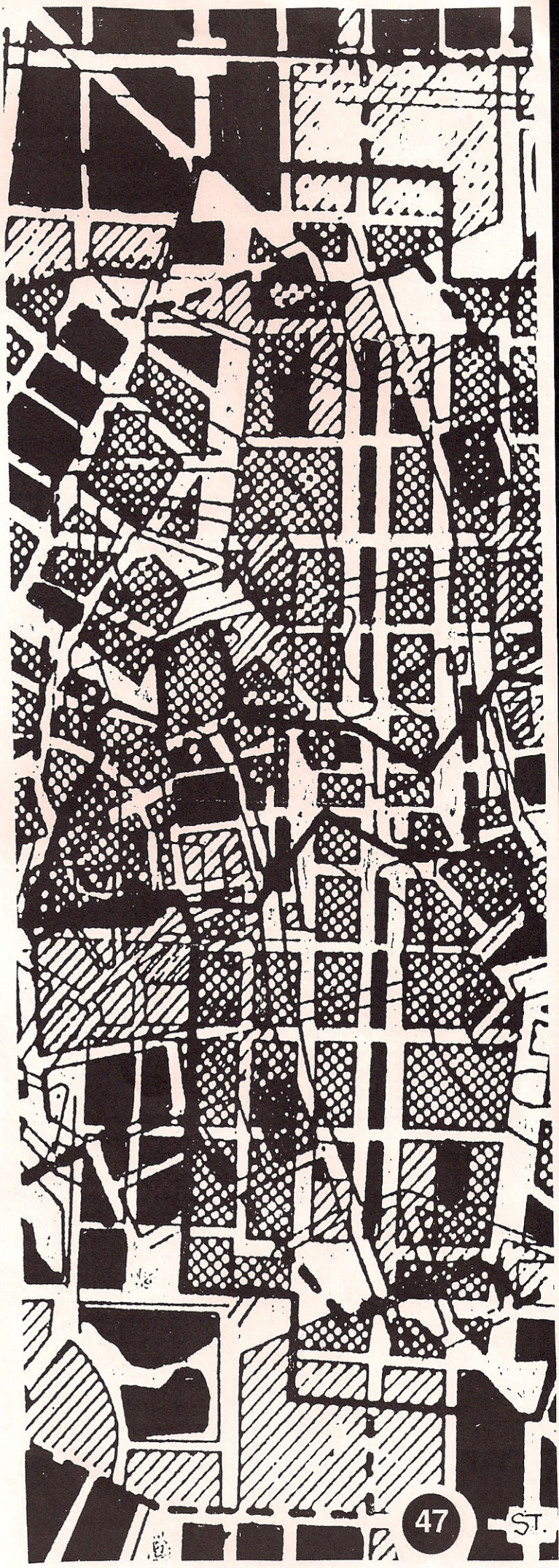
"The thing that I've been striving for for the last four years is to make an analogy between working on a music process and working on a visual project, so that you carry through the same working process. Before, they were completely different.I've brought them back to basic unit forms. One unit, one structure. Then replicate. This is the percussive musical language and the architectural visual language."

The State has increasingly adopted the use of digital equipment to make the music. This isn't any desire to be "up-to-date", it's simply a matter of convenience.

"The obvious thing is working with an analogue system, where you spend hours chopping and changing tape loops, which today you just do at the press of a button."

However, for The State, more has changed than just the convenience of the technology. Along with mass acceptance of music produced by the new electronic instruments has come a mass recognition of new forms of music. Modern soundtracks, effects used in jingles, even elements of pop songs, all use music that would have been considered experimental ten years ago. Elements of what may once have been the avant-garde or 'industrial' music have become part of the popular music vocabulary. And the result, according to The State, is that people know how to listen to far less conventional material than they used to.

"This goes back to the syntax, rhythm and form within the music. All these crashing sounds and rumbling noises and huge feedback noises that make people go



'no I can't listen to that, it disorientates my psyche', they are now accessible. I don't see any reason why people can't go out and buy a hundred thousand copies of, you know, a feedback noise. In a sense, people are plagiarising all these forms in music, and they're churning it out as popular culture.

"The syntax of the sound seems to have changed over the last five years. It's maybe something to do with the revolution in the digital sound. The people working in House and Hip Hop started sampling sounds, reevaluating them, putting them behind a 1-2-4 tempo. That has made the inaccessible accessible at the same time, because it's become much more commonplace. The weirdness of the experimental scene, that doesn't really exist any more.

"I think people do listen to it, and people always have. Whether they buy it or not, that's a different matter, because it's a different market completely. If we're going to talk about why people don't get access to it, I think it's because it's controlled by the mainstream. Mainstream radio stations are controlled by bigger bodies. Independent radio stations, as we all know, are owned by bigger organisations. You have to find the outlets to channel your music through, and once you've done that there's no problem."

As ever though, in Britain, it remains difficult to find such outlets. The State's own label, Sound Sound struggles as much as any other independent labels, and only Stanza's painting is genuinely commercially successful. Unlike the music, the painting survives as part of "high art culture", the world of exhibitions, installations, galleries. As "serious" art, it can actually be a financially rewarding activity, unlike pursuing experimental music.

As well as being exhibited elsewhere, Stanza helps run The Arch, a space under a nearby railway viaduct opened in 1989, used by several artists at the moment. This has housed exhibitions and installations, both by local artists and those further afield, but more generally functions as a studio for any of those involved. The aim, like the Ambulance Station before it, and like the Sound Sound label, is to emphasis the communal nature of underground art, and to satisfy the need for the culturally isolated to support and work with each other.

Performance is however another area where it's difficult to get things off the ground. Britain seems to have an unreliable attitude towards the support of experimental music-related performances. Attempts at festivals tend to be small and have limited success. There's no easy gig circuit, except for the jazz and improv members of the London Musicians' Collective, who support a number of small venues and regular events. Like many of the more experimentally inclined, The State has an interest in multi-media performances, developed through the years with Bourbonese Qualk, accompanying gigs with slide and film.

"I want to present both sound and visuals so that there's a correlation. It's happened before, but there are so many bands that just do it as entertainment, in a competitive field.

"I've had lots of offers to go and do performances, but there's no point. Unless you can get this totality of mediums involved in it, then I'm not interested. That to me would be something successful."

The State, Provision and Sound Sound have plenty of plans for the future. The label has involved itself with a variety of musical artists, from London and elsewhere. The State has a new album on the way to follow *Control*, which is currently half-finished.

"It's more ambient. But it seems to be a progression from the static to something very chaotic. It's as if to me, there's something about to happen. It's a bit more romantic than all the others. Maybe that's a maturing process that everyone goes through, but nevertheless, it's like the Young Gods, their aggression creates a certain romanticism. Similarly, Etant Donnes are very romantic, in the French sense. That's the only experience I get from them."

For further information or a Sound Sound catalogue, contact: **Sound Sound**, 92 Lilford Road, London SE5 9HR. Enclose an SAE or IRCs. Interview by **Brian Duguid**, February 1992.

Discography

Stanza has appeared on the following from 1983 to 1991.

Bourbonese Qualk: *Laughing Afternoon* LP 1983, Recloose LOOSE 004.

Bourbonese Qualk: *Hope* LP 1984, Recloose LOOSE 007.

Bourbonese Qualk: *The Spike* LP 1985, Dossier ST7504.

Bourbonese Qualk: *Preparing for Power* LP 1985, Recloose LOOSE 010.

Bourbonese Qualk: *Bourbonese Qualk* LP, New International NIR871.

Bourbonese Qualk: *Return to Order* Video 1986, Provision PV001.

Nocturnal Emissions: *Songs of Love and Revolution* LP.

Nocturnal Emissions: *Spiritflesh* LP.

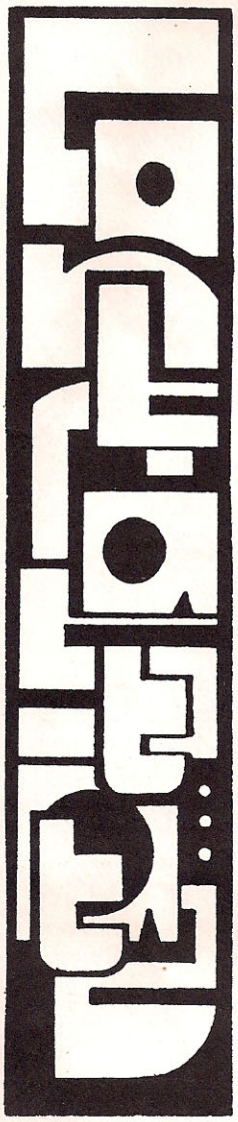
The State: *Conundrum* LP 1987, Dosser Records.

The State: *Artitexture* Video 1987, Provision PV003.

The State: *Conundrum* Video 1987, Provision PV004.

The State: *Schizoid* Cassette 1991, Sound Sound.

The State: *Control* CD / Cassette / Video 1991, Sound Sound.



My first encounter with **Contrastate** was via a small review of their first LP in *Audion*, and what attracted my interest was the description of their music as "grotesque" and "noisy". Well, I wouldn't attach such a harsh word as "grotesque" to their sound, but theirs is certainly a striking and expansive music.

Contrastate are Stephen Meixner and Jonathon Grieve. To date they have released two LPs on their own Black Rose Recordings label and a cassette for Peter Harrison's Direction Music. This year, a CD is planned for release by the Tesco Organisation in Germany.

The following interview was carried out by post in August and September 1991.

You have stated that when Contrastate was formed in 1987, your music was based on noise and volume. Can I infer from this that you were interested in and influenced by the power electronics scene? What do you think was the purpose of this ultra violent and confrontational music?

Although we stated that Contrastate's early music was based on noise and volume, I would not describe the music as power electronics. The sound sources used were for example: the base frequencies from a didgeridoo, high frequencies from glass, keyboards etc, all played at high volume. It was very much a physical bombardment of sound. We played one or two live performances but nothing was ever released in this form. The nearest example of what we used to do in our recorded work would probably be *As Time Began* on the first album *Seven Hands Seek Nine Fingers*. Although I was interested in groups like Whitehouse, Ramleh etc from the power electronics scene, I had no desire to repeat exactly what they had done.

The purpose of being ultra violent and confrontational could be described as a reaction against what was happening in other forms of music which were becoming conventional and unimaginative. Punk at the time was dying a slow death. It had come on the scene promising to shock people out of their traditional conventions but never really lived up to those expectations, and became as conventional as the music and traditions it was set against. Other kinds of music such as the electronic / new wave scene were just as uninspiring, preferring to make fashion statements rather than anything else. Also, music does not live independently from what is happening elsewhere. The early eighties was politically a confrontational time affecting everyone personally one way or another.

Why did you move towards a more atmospheric and experimental form of music? Does this reflect your personal interests, whether it be literature or art or film?

The move towards a more atmospheric form of music was more of a natural progression than anything else. Inspiration or ideas can come from films, literature and/or society. At the moment, the ideas behind the new recordings for the forthcoming CD *A Live Coal Under the Ashes* come from my interest in the political and social structure in Eastern Europe.

You have said that the only way you could describe Contrastate's music was as experimental music. How would you define the term "experimental" in the context of your music, given that this term covers a wide range of musics?

I dislike using tags but I find you generally have to use them or people use them to describe your music. "Experimental music" is just a tag, and yes, it does cover a wide range. I use the term "experimental" because we are not an industrial or noise band. Also, we are experimental in the sense that we like trying out different ideas, different ways of recording and different ways of using instruments. I would like to think that Contrastate does not stand still but that each release is different and a progression from the last. In that respect, because the term "experimental" does cover a wide range it does serve a purpose in that it does not immediately define our music as belonging to one fixed area of music or another.

Can you tell me something about the relationship between you and Jonathon in the realisation of Contrastate's music? Also, how important is Ben Hughes' contribution?

For the new recordings, Contrastate has three members: Jonathan Grieve, Stephen J Pomeroy, and myself. If all three members are playing on one piece, then each has an equally valuable and individual contribution to make. The same can be said if there are two members contributing to one piece.

Ben Hughes' contribution is only on the artwork side, but he does all our artwork. He plays a very important part in the overall presentation of a final Contrastate product.

Why do Contrastate exist? What purpose is there behind the band? I always believe that individuals play music more than for the pleasure of playing music, especially in the realm of experimentation.

Personally, I don't think there is anything wrong with individuals playing music for their own pleasure. Contrastate exists for our own pleasure, and we also hope that other people enjoy our products. As well as that, Contrastate exists as a vehicle for our own thoughts, ideas and interests. Whether it is Eastern Europe, or nightmares surpassing the limits of madness. We do not intend to preach, only comment on certain aspects or events. Whether other people will come to the same conclusion as us on our ideas (on Eastern Europe for instance) is neither here nor there, but the main thing is that hopefully we have induced some sort of response.

Do you consider live performances to be relevant, or is the release of recorded material sufficient?

I personally consider live performances to be important, but not as important as recorded material. Live performances are usually a one-off event lasting a certain period of time, whereas recorded material lasts indefinitely. Contrastate have not performed live for about two years, but I would certainly like to do more live performances in the future. Rather than it just being a live performance, we would want it to be an event, although that would take a lot of organisation and time.

Why do you think that Britain has such a problem with the acceptance of the avant garde in all art forms, whereas in Europe and even America, the new has always flourished? Does this disappoint you?

This is probably a question British artists have long been questioning and trying to answer. It certainly does disappoint me that the acceptance of something "new" in Britain always takes a lot of time and hard work. As to the question of why, I can only hazard a guess. The acceptance of something "new" usually means breaking with traditional ideas and values. The British have always been quite conservative in their outlook, and tradition has always played an important part in British culture. It could be put down in part to the "island" mentality that has recently risen to the fore again in British culture. The British have always tended to want things handed on a plate to them rather than to have to go out and work to find, or seek out, something new. In Europe the growth of new culture is generally seen as something good and can grow alongside an existing culture; whereas in Britain the growth of something new is seen as either weird and belonging to minority

tastes, or, taken to an extreme, as dangerous, and the refusal to accept it usually produced a polarisation of "them and us", leading to a kind of barrier mentality.

What has happened regarding the Portuguese compilation LP you were contributing to?

The compilation LP finally came out in July 1991. Apparently there are two volumes, each in an edition of 500, and each featuring different artists. The second volume has an unreleased track entitled *Through the Lens of the Mad Eye*, by Contrastate. I don't know how widely available it is, but the artwork and production are both very good.

How do you want Contrastate to develop? Do you have any firm plans or are you flexible?

There are no firm plans at the moment, but I would like to see Contrastate progressing in new areas with each new release. The new areas concerned will depend on our interests and ideas at the time of recording.

DISCOGRAPHY

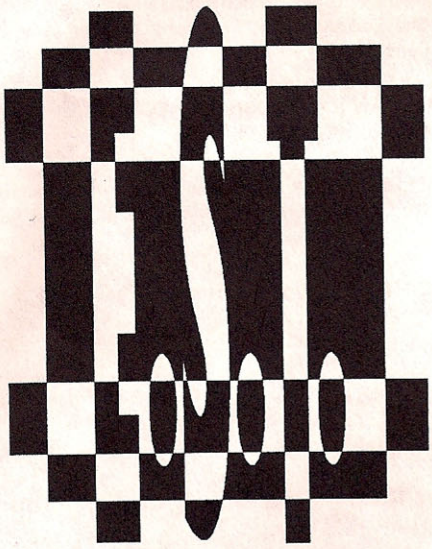
Seven Hands Seek Nine Fingers (Black Rose BRV 89-1001) LP

A Thousand Badgers in Labour (Black Rose BRV 90-1002) LP

"i" (Direction Music DMC 17) cassette

A Live Coal Under the Ashes (forthcoming CD 1992 from Tesco Organisation)

Contact: Contrastate, Stephen Meixner, 1 Milton Court, Barbican, London EC2Y 9BJ, U.K.. Interview by **Phil Taylor.**



DIRECTORY

Please provide an SAE (or a couple of International Reply Coupons) when writing to anyone listed below, and don't forget to mention E.S.T.! Addresses are U.K. unless otherwise noted. This list only represents people mentioned in this issue, and not adequately covered elsewhere, or who have sent updated catalogues since previous listings.

3RIO ART (Magisch Theater, Juliaandillenstraat 22, 2018 Antwerpen, BELGIUM)

An independent label doing CDs, vinyl and cassettes all with very high quality presentation and with a shared interest in ritual music. They also do a weekly radio show on Radio Centraal Antwerpen (103.9 FM).

BEN ALLEN (117A Great Victoria Street, Belfast, N. Ireland)

Like Mark Pawson, below, cultural icon Ben Allen, as well as being an artist with kitsch / surrealist influences, sells the world a variety of colourful t-shirts. Dare you be seen without one?

ANOMALOUS RECORDS (P.O. Box 38267, Los Angeles, CA 90038-0267, USA)

As well as running their own comparatively low-key label, Anomalous stock a variety of "post-industrial" experimental noise music, which they sell both to shops and mail order. Labels covered include the likes of Barooni, Realization and Staalplaat, with artists from Muslimgauze to Zoviet France. I found enough goodies in their catalogue to make a transAtlantic order worthwhile.

ARTWARE AUDIO (Donna Klemm, Taunusstr. 63b, 6200 Wiesbaden, Germany)

Time to get your Deutschmarks out. If the idea of buying things from a foreign mail-order firm seems unnecessarily laborious to you, then it's just because you haven't yet seen Artware's huge catalogue of industrial and experimental music, including some printed matter too. Alternatively, look at it the same way you view window-shopping. There may be too much good music here for the health of your bank balance, but just looking can be quite enjoyable.

AUDIOFILE TAPES (209-25 18 Avenue, Bayside, NY 11360, USA)

Still one of America's major indie cassette labels, with a silly amount of cassettes to its name from aT1 (Test Dept) ever onwards. Full interview next issue.

BETTER DAYS (56 Whiting Road, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 8HR)

Repository of all things underground and psychedelic, Better Days stocks music from space/psych-rock groups like (the now well-known) Ozric Tentacles and the Magic Mushroom Band, as well as stranger people like Cabbage Head.

CHAINSAW CASSETTES (11 Layton Road, Islington, London N1 0PX)

It would be unfair to describe Chainsaw as an identikit indie cassette label, complete with typewriter and photocopied inlays, as they have more than enough commitment to what they're doing to make up for any shortcomings in presentation. Artists vary from the noiserock of Headbutt through to more experimental or industrial outfits like factor X or Chemical Plant. They're now up to release number 20, and they're all very affordable.

CHEESES INTERNATIONAL (515a Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 4AG)

I'm afraid they're right out of Venezuelan Beaver, although there are fine varieties like Cranioclast, De Fabriek, Sigillum S and Merzbow. C.I. is a UK source for several foreign labels including Artware and CoC, and a useful point of contact for fans of noisy abstract stuff.

CORDELIA RECORDS (25 Arnesby Crescent, Leicester LE2 6QZ)

A mimsical little label and mail-order thingummy, carrying their own bizarre psychpop records as well as labels like Hamster and Egg Plant, and a variety of music ranging from Nurse With Wound to the Happy Mondays and Napalm Death. All at very reasonable prices. Send 50p for catalogue / fanzine.

COUNTER PRODUCTIONS (PO Box 556, London SE5 0RL)

Still stocking an intriguing selection of bizarre, fringe, deviant publications covering everything from surrealism to anarchism. A recent catalogue update covered things like the Illuminatus comic book and metaphysical dolphinologist John Lilly's autobiography. Recommended.

DBUT (PO Box 9415, Vålerenga, 0610 Oslo, NORWAY)

dBUT is a new "network access point", aiming to distribute and promote products from the underground networks, spread contacts, release its own recordings, arrange gigs etc. They seem to have a variety of musical, magickal and mail-art type interests, and I wish them the best.

EARTHLY DELIGHTS (PO Box 1QG, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE99 1QG)

Still out there, the label and mail-order catalogue brought to you by the same people as are behind the band Nocturnal Emissions. A good place to go for the back catalogue of the Nockies and fellow-Newcastle residents Zoviet France, as well

as plenty of other material, including John Duncan, The State and The Hafler Trio.

EMPTY QUARTER (P.O. Box 87, Ilford, Essex IG1 3HJ)

Still a major source of hardbeat, industrial and experimental music within the UK, including secondhand as well as new material, occasionally overpriced but generally reasonable. If you're struggling to navigate the mail-order waterways, this is one channel worth following.

LES FLEURS DU MAL (Nicola Catalano, Via MArconi, 92 - (parco Angelica), 80046 S. Giorgio A Cremano (NA), ITALY)

Les Fleurs du Mal is a one-man promotion organisation for unconventional musics, also organising audio-visual events and involved in a radio programme. Nicola is a helpful contact for anyone in the scene trying to distribute or promote their product.

FRONT DE L'EST (13 rue Verrier Lebel, 80000 Amiens, FRANCE)

The latest supplement to the Front de L'Est mail-order catalogue covers a whole load of insutrial and experimental groups on labels like Staalplaat, Antler-Subway and Minus Habens, as well as rarities and hard-to-find material.

HYPERTONIA WORLD ENTERPRISES (Jan R Bruun, P.O. Box 4307, Nygårdstangen, N-5028, Bergen, NORWAY)

With a catalogue of over 80 tapes, Hypertonia is another of the most active members of the underground cassette scene, covering homemade music from pop through to experimental material. Jan is friendly and always looking for new contacts. Plans for this year include four more volumes of *Walkman Meltdown* and *Watching Satan - The Legacy of Charles Manson.*

HYPNAGOGIA RECORDS (NEW ADDRESS: 25 Humberstone Close, Leagrave, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 9ST)

Hypnagogia is now up to gog 02, their third release, a cassette by Runzelstirn and Gurgelstøck. On the way soon is a compilation CD *Sky Flowers and Horse Eggs.* Thoughtful packaging, conceptual recordings and cult noise a speciality.

IRRE-TAPES (Matthias Lang, Barendellstraße 35, 6795 Kindsbach, GERMANY)

Write for a free catalogue with over seventy independent cassettes, varying from skewhiff pop through to the extreme experimental scene. "A non-commercial and unusual music". A reasonable introduction to the cassette scene.

LIMUR (Grindvakten 13, S-442 39 Kungälv, SWEDEN)

Indie Swedish label providing us with a variety of electropop and slightly more experimental sounds.

METAMKINE (13 rue de la Drague, 38600 Fontaine, FRANCE)

The latest mail-order catalogue from Metamkine expands their selection of electroacoustic music, musique concrete and other experimental material. It ranges from the famous (Pierre Schaeffer, Trevor Wishart) to the less well known, and includes labels like Edition RZ and The Aerial, as well as Metamkine's own releases.

MIND SCAN (c/o Robert Maycock, 71 Millmead Road, Margate, Kent CT9 3QJ)

Still going strong, the archetypal underground cassette label. Some tragically ignored artists in their industrial / electronic catalogue.

MINUS HABENS (c/o Ivan Iusco, via Giustino Fortunata 8/N, 70125 Bari, ITALY)

Fast shaping up as a premier label for industrial noise, and more recently, hardbeat stuff too. Excellent design and presentation and some very impressive music. What is it about Italy that spawns all these great labels?

NETWORK 77 (P.O. Box 4713, Cape Town 8000, SOUTH AFRICA)

Music distributor and label, N77 has fourteen of their own releases, and also carries others by people like Zone, David Prescott and Peter Frohmader. A distant outpost or merely the tip of the iceberg?

ODD SIZE (24 rue de Laghouat, 75018 Paris, FRANCE)

One of the better labels and mail order distributors. As a label, they showcase several interesting post-industrial artists, and as a distributor they provide a wallet-scaringly large selection of hard-to-find recordings from around the world, especially continental Europe. Is there anyone out there who doesn't have their latest mail-order catalogue, #5? What are you waiting for?

ORGONE RECORDS (The Bungalow, Chapel Lane, Butleigh, Glastonbury, Somerset; or new address at 4 Spencer Court, Brooks Road, Street, Somerset BA16 0PN)

A small but perfectly formed mail order source for various industrial and post-industrial recordings, like Muslimgauze, Nocturnal Emissions and Foetus. Prices reasonable and very friendly. See ad elsewhere.

MARK PAWSON (P.O. Box 664, London E5 0JW)

As well as being a mail-artist extraordinaire, Mark generously makes available to the world plenty of badges, stickers and t-shirts, the last including a particularly hip "Aggressive School of Cultural Workers" number.

RADIO TANGERINE WAVE (F.O.S.S. & ART, Oleg Onoprienko & Sergey Tutov, P.O Box 20, Moscow 105425, RUSSIA)

Who knows how R.T.W. have been getting on since they wrote to me last year? They already seemed to have a good grasp of free-market economics, inviting foreign labels, musicians and magazines to get in touch so as to begin to open up the emerging Soviet musical market. On a less cynical note, cultural exchange is never a bad thing. R.T.W. are trying to produce a magazine, and already run one all-USSR radio program (possibly others now) devoted to electronic music. Any material you can send is welcome, and they're happy to provide information or cooperate in any way.

RRRECORDS (151 Paige St., Lowell, MA 01852, USA)

America's noisiest label and mail-order service, RRRecords stocks a wide variety of musical material, mostly of a loud and dissonant nature, although by no means all of it. The label has many releases to its name, including a couple of videos, and seems to be a fan of unusual packaging for many of its products. Well worth checking out, especially for fans of industrial noise: Autopsia, Nurse With Wound and Zoviet France are amongst the many names in the latest catalogue.

RUNCITER CORPORATION (7 Boyne Road, Lewisham, London SE13 5AL)

As well as their natty line in bizarro comics, and a few wacky and unlistenable cassettes, Runciter has under its roof some of the finest graphic design to be found in this splendid country of ours.

SILENT RECORDS (540 Alabama, Suite 315, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA)

As well as running their own very high-quality label dedicated to ambient-industrial and experimental music, Silent distribute lots of other stuff, from the most bizarre through to grindcore and techno material.

SOUND WEIRD (Ken MacKenzie, The Deeford Centre, 59 Riverside Drive, Aberdeen AB1 7LE)

Rising from the ashes of the *Rat Music Company* comes Sound Weird, aiming to cover a wide cross-section of secondhand and new underground music. Mostly it's rock and electronic music, with psychedelic and cosmic synth stuff prominent, although other weird music creeps in too

SPEED OF SOUND (Dept S, Sneddi Merchandising, 25 McPhail St., Glasgow G40 1EL)

S.O.S. stock hardcore, thrash, industrial, electronic, experimental and indie music and related material, and welcome submissions for review in their zine-cum-catalogue. Issue 1 of which is available now for a large SAE.

STRENGTH THROUGH AWARENESS (53 Blackfriars Way, Salisbury SP1 2HE)

Those suppliers of extreme electronick, experimental and destroyed muzik-noise are back again, with a variety of inexpensive tapes by people like Con-Dom, Sigillum S and the Grey Wolves.

TAK TAK TAK (P.O. Box 7, Bulwell, Nottingham NG6 0HW)

A home for poetry and music. They produce books and spoken-word cassettes on the poetry side of things, and the recordings include material by the likes of saxophonist Lol Coxhill and ex-Shock-Headed-Peter Karl Blake, plus Left Hand Right Hand. If you're a lit-scene fan, then Tak Tak Tak seem a reasonably priced bunch.

TECHNODELIA INSTITUTE (c/o P. Andersson, Fredbergsg. 3B, 414 65 Göteborg, SWEDEN)

Technodelia do mail-order for a variety of industrial and post-industrial music, including labels like Dark Vinyl & Staalplaat, bands like Soviet France and Laibach, and plenty of Swedish groups, from Njurmännen to the much harder Brighter Death Now. Worth checking out if you're from that part of the world, or outside it and looking for some of the music from it.

THESE RECORDS (387 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 7JL, UK)

Formerly Recommended Distribution, the label These Records has now lent its name to the distribution service and retail shop too. The best shop for experimental music in the UK, the mail-order side covers everything from jazz-rock to avant-garde classical, via several peculiar pitstops along the way. Still Recommended.

T.O.P.Y. HEART (P.O. Box 2055, Moseley, Birmingham B14 7LS)

Still going strong, TOPY HEART carry a variety of cassettes (eg Burroughs spoken word), plenty of their own TOPY-related publications, t-shirts and also, as HEART ACTION, loads of other occult-related books and booklets.

T.O.P.Y. LONDON (P.O. Box 1455, London N4 1JT)

As well as an ever-growing archive of "occultural" cassettes: spoken word recordings relating to the occult, Leary, Burroughs, Manson etc, TOPY London publish some of their own booklets and bulletins. A couple of new publications out now!

TRAX (Vittore Baroni, c/o The Stickerman Museum, Via Battisti, 339, 55049 Viareggio, LU, ITALY)

As well as a variety of mail-art projects, and publishing *Arte Postale!* magazine, Vittore's Trax catalogue covers various audio projects and mail-art publications, including a Psychic TV lyric book and otherwise unreleased CD.

THE TRUNDLEY EXPERIENCE (8 Coris Close, Marton Manor, Middlesborugh, Cleveland TS7 8SR)

Trundley's mail order catalogue includes interviews with the likes of Purr, Insane Music and Wat Tyler, while their extensive mail-order coverage includes punk and noise bands from Crass to Stretch Heads, and plenty of others in between.

ULTIMA THULE (1 Conduit Street, Leicester LE2 0JN)

UT divide their mail-order catalogue up into categories of Rock & Fusion (the largest), Synth & New Age, and Avant Garde & Experimental, which gives a good idea of their coverage. They have a retail shop at the same address, which I'd love to visit, and their an indispensable tool for any hardened "new music" record-hunter.

V2 ORGANISATION (Muntelstraat 23, 5211 PT's-Hertogenbosch, NETHERLANDS)

As well as organising performances and installations at V2, they document these and make available various music-and-art related products, including videos. In the past they've covered noisy people like Merzbow and The Haters, as well as Laibach, Test Dept etc.

WORLD SERPENT DISTRIBUTION (Unit 717 Seager Buildings, Brookmill Road, London SE8 4HL)

Evolving out of the now-deceased People Who Can't Distribution, World Serpent is the frequently exclusive distributor of labels like Durtro, Shock and Side Effects, covering artists like Nurse With Wound, Sol Invictus and Current 93.

ESTDirectory compiled by **BD**.

David Minshall, Bristol

Regarding your article on fascist imagery in **E S T 1**, with particular reference to your mention of the Viennese Aktionists Rudolf Schwarzkogler and Hermann Nitsch. The basic facts in that paragraph are incorrect.

Schwarzkogler never carried out any acts of self-mutilation. This myth probably began with an incorrect article in **Time**. Comments such as those on **Nurse With Wound**'s *To The Quiet Men From A Tiny Girl* LP cover further strengthened the myth. Schwarzkogler became schizophrenic and died after jumping from a window in 1969. He is best known for his photographic work, for which Heinz Gibulka was his model. The pictures were by Schwarzkogler, not of him. Everything in the photographs was simulated.

Nitsch's rituals used dead animals from slaughter houses. They were not 'sacrificed' as part of the rituals. He has had a bull slaughtered as part of a ritual. No torture was involved, and the bull was due for slaughter. Only the location was changed.

[Thanks. My main source was Rose Lee Goldberg's *Performance Art*. **BD**]

P.B.K., California

I especially enjoyed reading your article on **Thee Grey Wolves**, and the racist / fascist element of industrial / noise music. Aside from a letter exchange between myself and Ben Gilbert, later published in **Chemical Castration**, I haven't seen any type of extended essay concerning these issues. I've always been clear about my distaste for the backwards ideologies represented by such groups as **AWB**, **Terre Blanche** and their ilk, and I've found it a bit hair-raising that so many individuals ignore the *context* of the music to listen only to the *sonic* aspects (i.e. was it good noise?!) It is necessary for us to initiate dialogue concerning these issues, and articles like yours here are the impetus for examining the inundation of shock images / tactics linked up to, correlated with, industrial / noise music. That whole mind set holds back any hope for an evolving and positive "movement" within the underground scene - it only provides more fragmentation - and my feeling is, at this point, we haven't even *begun* to explore the potential for "expression" using noise elements. When I can put my gut-level emotions across in as powerful a way as, say, John Coltrane or Albert Ayler or Cecil Taylor, then will I find restitution.

P D Condon, London

I spotted a flaw in your *Unacceptable Face* essay. It goes thus: in *what way* is it 'harmful' to be interested in fascism if you're not actually a fascist yourself? Due to the general weirdness of the human psyche people somehow seem to be capable of showing interest in such matters without actually genuinely sympathising with them at all. Maybe there's a danger of losing the irony and falling for black propaganda - but of course the main danger is of turning into a hypocrite fashion-following dullard who can't think for oneself. So - *that*'s the danger, but this wasn't mentioned in the essay. It seems to be a countercultural parallel to arguments involving obnoxious mass-media films, books etc.

[It certainly is, which is why those of us concerned by the neo-nazis in the experimental music world need to be careful not to end up behaving like the mainstream's censors. I didn't intend to imply that it's a bad thing to be *interested* in fascism: obviously, I'm interested in it myself. What worries me are the artists popularly perceived to be "exploring" fascist imagery who seem to spend quite a lot of their time hanging out with known neo-nazis. One rather well-known label is currently suffering a bit of a crisis of conscience about one of their artists. The label boss loves his music, and wants to put it out, but they also have misgivings about his alleged fascist links. What should they do? This is the point that I think PBK was making: which is more important about this artist's frequently aggressive music - the content? Or the context? **BD**]

Letters are welcome on any topic: if you have any comments on the articles or interviews that's great, but general thoughts on what parts of the magazine could do with improvement are also very useful. Due to being so short of space this issue, I haven't had the chance to do anything about coverage of films, live reviews or anything else suggested last time. These may well come next time, unless enough people dislike the idea.

The reviews this issue have increased E S T 's page count from 48 to 56 pages: this is not likely to be a regular occurrence, and it's being partly paid for by the lack of a colour cover and the adverts. From now on, I'm not going to promise to review everything received: anything sent that doesn't really fall within E S T 's subject area is unlikely to get covered. That's still a pretty wide area, however, from techno dance through to avant-garde classical composers.

Subscriptions

I try only take advance payment for one issue at a time, but if you trust me, feel free to pay for more. Next issue can be advance ordered for £1.50 UK (cheque preferred, payable to B. DUGUID) or £2 elsewhere (I.M.O., cash or cheque drawn on UK bank). I can also accept $4 US cash for any foreign order. If you have any difficulty with any of these payment methods, get in touch and we'll sort something out.

Review Material

Music, videos, zines - whatever it is, it's welcome for review. If you're supplying music on an unlabelled cassette, please label it clearly as to what it is. Please also attach details of where the item can be obtained from / UK distributor etc. Anyone sending material for review gets a free copy of the magazine the review appears in as exchange. Any format for material is acceptable: LP, CD, tape or video (VHS/PAL system only; ie no American or Japanese NTSC tapes).

Contributions

As the editorial says, these are as welcome as ever. Interviews, news, articles, reviews, send them all in. E S T obviously can't afford to pay for them: as ever the reward is one or more free copies of the zine. Potential reviewers should send details of their areas of interest, as I'll be only too happy to offload lots of review material onto them: they get to keep whatever they review.

Contributions should be legibly handwritten or preferable typed. Best of all are contributions on IBM-compatible floppy disc (any size), in ASCII text format.

Adverts

Yes, we're now accepting ads. I'm happy to exchange ads with similar publications, but the rest of you have to pay. Limited ad space is available - please write for deadlines and rates.

Deadline

Next issue ought to come out sooner than this one did, since there's already quite a lot of material ready to go into it. Expect it possibly around October.

Music

If you want to hear the music reviewed in the zine, go out and buy it! If you can't find anything mentioned here, get in touch and I'll try to track it down. If you want recommendations on sampler tapes etc, write and I'll see what help I can offer.

THE BACK PAGE

Credits

Artwork: Ben Allen (page 23); Nicola Catalano (8, 9, 55); Contrastate (49, 50); factor X (2, 44); Stanza (front and back cover, 45-47).

Photos: Thanks to Negativland (19, 20); Third Mind Records (5); unknown (14).

Writers: Brian Duguid, Marc Gascoigne, Donna Klemm, Matthew Riley, Roger Sutherland, Phil Taylor, Mark Winkelmann, MX.

Edited: Brian Duguid / First Church of Xajus^3.

Thanks: There just isn't room to thank everyone who contributed in some way to this issue individually. Thanks to all the musicians, labels, interviewees, and anyone who helped out in whatever way.

Back Issues

The following back issues are still available (as are further copies of issue 3) for £1.50 each (£2 or US$4 CASH if outside UK). Get 'em while you still can! Wholesale rates are available for larger orders: send an SAE or IRC for details.

Issue 1: Interviews: Robert Anton Wilson, Nocturnal Emissions, Controlled Bleeding, Insane Music. Articles: The Unacceptable Face of Freedom?, UK Anarchist Publications. News. Zines. Directory. Over 80 Music Reviews from AAAK to Zoviet France.

Issue 2: Interviews: Zoviet France, Asmus Tietchens, Direction Music, factor X, IRRE Tapes. Articles: Violet Glass Oracle, Hit the Floor. News. Books. Zines. Directory. Over 130 Music Reviews from Arcane Device to Zone.

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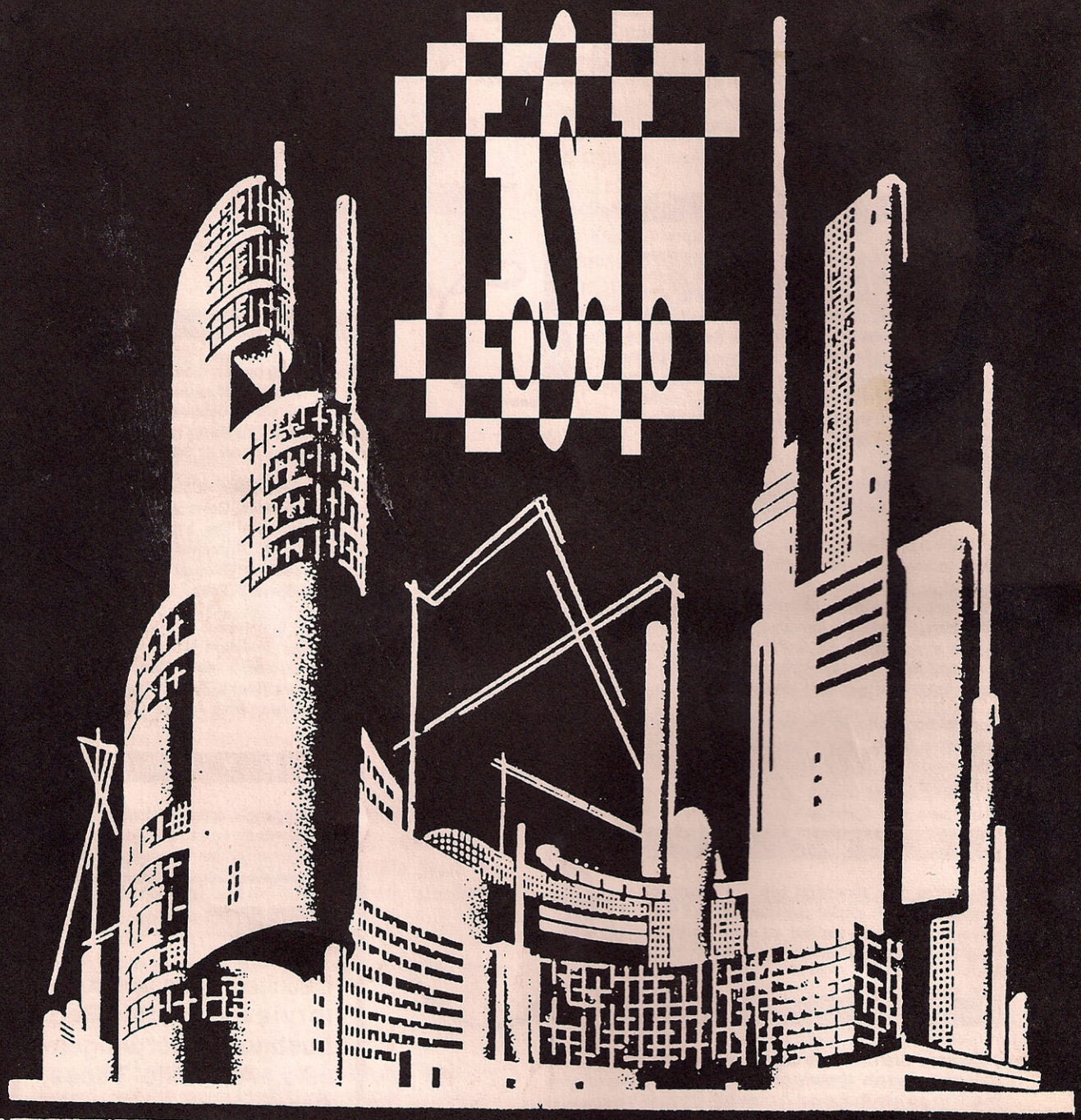
Next Issue

Definitely lined up are interviews with **God**, **Lustmørd**, **Morphogenesis**, **Audiofile Tapes**, **Somewhere in Europe** and **Ivan Iusco** of Minus Habens. Plus possibly an article on Test Dept, and all the usual reviews and news. Maybe even that article on Occult Zines that's been promised since Issue One!



Мы убеждены, что правильное решение проблем конструктивных форм одинаково важно для всех отраслей человеческого творчества: и для архитектуры, и для машиностроения, и для прикладного искусства и для полиграфического дела и т. д. Конструктивизм [illegible]жен и может учесть все конкретные потребности современной жизни и ответить полностью запросам массового потребителя, коллективного „заказчика" — народа.

OUR WEAPON IS OUR MUSIC
OUR MUSIC IS OUR POLITICS